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Human Caring, Self-Efficacy Beliefs, and Professional Organizational Culture Correlates of Employee Retention in Child Welfare.

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HUMAN CARING, SELF-EFFICACY BELIEFS, AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE CORRELATES OF EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN CHILD WELFARE

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
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in partial fulfillment of the
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Doctor of Philosophy

in

The School of Social Work

by
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Completing requirements for the doctorate has provided me the opportunity to research areas of the child welfare workforce and reflect on workforce problems that I probably otherwise would not have done. It brings to fruition my goal to gain advanced child welfare knowledge and to develop a meaningful line of inquiry for future study. This of course was possible only because of dedicated faculty at LSU and the support I received from my employing child welfare agency. The Louisiana Department of Social Services/Office of Community Services granted me educational leave to attend classes.

I wish to acknowledge the sound advice and support I received from my committee chair, Ken Millar, Dean of the LSU School of Social Work, whose direction has helped me to keep sight of my academic destination and to successfully navigate my way along this journey. I also appreciate the guidance provided by members of my dissertation committee, Associate Dean Leslie Leighninger, Dorinda Noble, the LSU Graduate School representative Stuart Irvine, and Gary Gregarus, who served as my minor professor in Industrial and Organizational Psychology. They encouraged me to break new ground by completing a multi-state study and further my skills and abilities as a researcher.

This research study included the entire population of professional level staff in the states of Arkansas and Louisiana's public child welfare systems. The study would not have been possible without the cooperation, collaboration and permission of the directors of both state organizations (a) The Arkansas Department of Human Services, Roy Kindle, current Director and Lisa McGee, former Acting Director; and (b) The

Louisiana Department of Social Services/Office of Community Services, Carmen Weisner, current Assistant Secretary and Shirley Goodwin, former Assistant Secretary. These state agency heads are to be commended for daring to examine their organizations with the goal of organizational improvement. There were 956 professional level staff who took considerable time from their work to complete a lengthy and comprehensive survey. I am especially indebted to them for their participation in this two-state study. The vast majority of staff care about their clients and strive to make a positive difference in their lives.

To my parents who instilled in me strong values for education, integrity, dedication, being a good citizen and striving to make society better for all who follow, I am deeply appreciative. My adult children have been understanding and cheered me on for undertaking this unusual journey in mid-life. I have found commiserating with my child welfare colleague, classmate and friend, Sue Steib, a great source of comfort, support and reflection.

Finally and significantly, my husband Chad, a professor and educator, researcher and scholar of many years, has been an enthusiastic mentor, supporter, and guide to help me successfully achieve this academic endeavor.

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to explore individual and organizational factors useful in explaining retention of professional staff in public child welfare agencies. The study examined linkages among a set of theoretically grounded personal/psychological and organizational variables and child welfare professionals' expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare. Typically, studies in human services organizations have focused on issues pertaining to employee turnover and burnout. Alternatively, this study addressed personal and organizational factors related to employee retention in child welfare. The study used large sample survey and quantitative data analysis methods to examine relationships among elements of professional organizational culture, human caring, self-efficacy, and professional level employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare in two states (Arkansas and Louisiana). Measures of intent to remain (employed) in child welfare settings, human caring, self-efficacy beliefs, and professional organizational culture were developed to explore linkages among the study variables. Differences between groups of respondents' characteristics and the two sample states (e.g., degree level, years of employment) were also examined.

Results of the study showed that intention to remain employed in child welfare is largely explained by staff members' positive perceptions of administrative support and self-efficacy motivation beliefs about work tasks. Large differences between the two states were evident in the age, length of employment and in educational degrees. Implications of the findings for the pre-service preparation, recruitment, selection, retention and professional development of child welfare staff were provided, and

suggestions for future research and theory building within the context of child welfare were described.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Overview and Context

Employing competent and qualified employees is important to any organization, especially in the social work area of child welfare where critical decisions that impact families and the safety and well-being of children are made on a daily basis. The quality of services can only be as high as the competence of the professionals that provide them (Ewalt, 1991). While employee competence is essential to quality of client services, there are many other personal and organizational factors that influence the quality of services as well. This study examined personal and organizational factors as they relate to professional level public child welfare employees' intentions to remain employed in public child welfare.

Public child welfare is the system in every state responsible for responding to reports of child abuse and neglect, providing protective services, foster care and adoption, recruiting and certifying foster and adoptive parents. The contexts for the study were the public child welfare agencies in Arkansas and Louisiana. There has been a variety of studies completed over the years concerned with the issue of employee burnout and turnover in child welfare. While informative, these studies have not focused on the alternative perspective of why child welfare staff choose to remain employed in this difficult work context. Undoubtedly, there are many factors that contribute to child welfare employees' decisions to remain in or leave their jobs. These include personal factors, organizational factors, work incentives, career opportunities, and conflicting life choices. This study focused on the personal/psychological factors of human caring and self-efficacy and elements of professional organizational culture as

these related to child welfare employees' expressed intentions to remain employed in this challenging and complex work setting. The section that follows is a brief review of relevant literature framing the context of the study. A more detailed review of the literature is found in Chapter 2.

Brief Literature Review

The Need to Study Personnel Issues in Child Welfare

The U.S. Government Accounting Office (1995) found that after funding, staffing is the second most serious issue with which child welfare systems are confronted. As the needs and complexities associated with serving child welfare families and children have increased during the past 10 - 20 years, there has also been a noticeable decline in staff qualifications and an associated de-professionalization of child welfare (Costin, Karger & Stoesz,1996; Lieberman, Russell & Hornby,1988; Leighninger & Ellett, 1998; Lewandowski, 1998; Miller & Dore, 1991).

There is concern that lowered employee qualifications have resulted in an erosion of the capacity of child welfare staff for case planning, child safety, achieving a permanent home for each child, and child and family well-being. Concomitantly, the Adoption and Safe Families Act (P.L. 105-89, 1997), is new Federal legislation that imposes strict time limitations to accomplish these mandates. Public, political, and judicial confidence in the public child welfare system has so eroded that the trend to privatize child welfare functions continues. For example, the state of Kansas abandoned its existing public system outright in 1996, and privatized all but child maltreatment investigations (Lewandowski, 1998).

When child abuse and neglect cases fall to the responsibility of child welfare staff without essential competencies for successful practice, the consequences for children may lead to severe abuse or neglect, permanent impairment, even death, or denial of a permanent family in which to grow up. Therefore, it seems of utmost importance to hire employees who have qualities that reflect the requisite knowledge, skills, abilities, and values necessary for child welfare assignments and who can contribute to the organization's ability to carry out its mission and statutory mandates as well, i.e. re-professionalize the child welfare workforce (Costin, et al., 1996; Ellett & Millar, 1996; Helfgott, 1991; Lieberman, et al., 1988; Pecora, Brier, & Zlotnik, 1989; Pecora, Whittaker & Maluccio, 1992; Rittner & Wodarski, 1999; Terpstra, 1992; Zlotnik, 1998).

The human services professions, social work and child welfare in particular, face difficult work contexts with disappointments, heavy work loads, involuntary clients with seemingly intractable problems, and pressures from the formal organization as well as the external environment over which they have no control (Ellett, Ellett, Noble, & Kelley, 1996; Hopkins, Mudrick, & Rudolph, 1999; Rycus & Hughes, 1994). Thus, there is a need to study staff who are expected to carry out important mandates to protect maltreated children as well as to assure these children permanent families that promote their well-being.

The result of child welfare de-professionalization, has been employment of often well meaning individuals lacking essential educational and professional social work preparation who are expected to carry out complex policies and to deliver services to arguably, the nation's most needy and troubled segment of the population. A national

study by Lieberman, et al. (1988) revealed that only 28% of child welfare employees had a social work degree. Their study exemplifies the extent to which de-professionalization has penetrated child welfare staffing. Thus, lack of adequate preparation for professional work in child welfare settings, coupled with increased job demands, may be the impetus for high employee turnover (Anderson, 1994; Costin, et al., 1996.; Ellett, 1999; Ellett, et al. 1996; Fryer, Miyoshi, & Thomas, (1989); Harrison, 1995; Helfgott, 1991; Leighninger & Ellett, 1998; Lewandowski, 1998; McMahon, 1999; Pecora, et al. 1992; Smith & Laner, 1990).

The Problem of Turnover

Employee turnover in child welfare is a significant problem due to lost investments in the preparation and training of staff, in addition to disruptions and lowered quality of client services. Turnover statistics vary from state to state and county to county with an average of 30 to 40% (Pecora, et al. 1992; Reagh, 1994; Rycraft, 1994). Recently, one private agency reported 100% turnover following the requirement to work with the entire family rather than individual children (Liederman, 1998). Ellett (1995) reported that turnover in staff employed in Louisiana with three years or less employment ran as high as 39% in one large urban office.

According to members of the Louisiana Office of Community Services (OCS) Job Study Work Group (2000), it takes approximately two years for new hires in child welfare to learn what needs to be done in their jobs and to acquire the knowledge, skills, abilities, and values to work independently. Most pre and in-service training for child welfare staff is provided in the first six months of employment (Midgley, et al., 1994).

For agencies, this represents a substantial investment of time and money in new employees.

One goal of recent efforts to re-professionalize child welfare nation wide, has been to better prepare child welfare staff to address the problem of staff turnover, especially during the initial years of employment. One major federally funded effort is the Title IV-E partnership program between university schools and departments of social work and their respective state child welfare agency (Brown & Chavkin, 2000; Gansle & Ellett, 1997; Harris, 1996; Hopkins, et al. 1999; Lewandowski, 1998; Okamura & Jones, 1998; Terpstra, 1992; Zlotnik, 1998). This program is designed to attract potential child welfare professionals by means of stipends as well as by providing opportunities for experienced child welfare staff to upgrade their skills and credentials by obtaining the master of social work (MSW) degree. Staff turnover negates investments made in higher education through stipends and educational leave and on-the-job and formal in-service training of staff who leave after brief employment. Turnover further erodes limited agency resources.

Turnover is costly. It is costly because of the lost dollars invested in training newly hired employees and lost expertise of experienced employees. There is also a lag time between the departing worker and the newly employed worker which places an additional burden on existing staff and disrupts the continuity of services and planning for children and families (Cicero-Reese & Black, 1998; Helfgott, 1991; Ellett, 1995; Pecora, et al. 1992; Winefield & Barlow, 1995).

Turnover of child welfare staff affects client services. Clients are sensitive to changes in child welfare staff who work with them and experience numerous workers as

confusing. Additionally, some clients have effectively utilized arguments centered on discontinuity of services in court to delay termination of parental rights and adoption for their children, even when there is little likelihood they can parent the child. Therefore, child welfare agencies would do well to make the retention of competent employees an important goal to benefit clients, staff and their total organization (Hlefgott, 1991; Reagh, 1994; Rycraft, 1994).

Many studies report lack of promotional opportunities and poor supervision as major organizational factors in the decision to leave employment in child welfare (Ellett, 1995; Helfgott 1991; Kern, McFadden, Baumann & Law 1993; Lewandowski, 1998; Pecora, et al. 1992; Rittner & Wodarski, 1999; Samantrai 1992). In a statewide study of Louisiana public child welfare personnel, Ellett, found that many employees experience a mid career slump in professional attitudes and work morale between the fourth and 12th year of employment. External factors, such as client, court, media, and public criticisms were also found to have negative impacts on employees' perceptions of their work and their personal and professional esteem. This study builds upon the prior study (Ellett) and extends a line of inquiry concerned with staff retention in child welfare.

De-Professionalization

Until the 1970s, the desired degree for employment in public child welfare was the MSW (Leighninger & Ellett, 1998). Numerous events, including reductions in federal funding throughout the past two decades, and a five-fold increase in reports of abuse and neglect from 1976 to 1993, have led to an erosion of prestige, esteem, and professionalism in public child welfare. As child welfare has become a less attractive

field in social work, other areas of practice, especially mental health, have been able to compete successfully for the best MSW graduates. During the past three decades, state agencies and state civil service/merit systems have addressed a shortage of available MSW and BSW employees by lowering job qualifications. All of these occurrences, and others, have contributed to the de-professionalization of child welfare, resulting in a system in which any undergraduate degree, and in some states a high school diploma, can substitute for the previous minimum education qualification of a degree in social work (Costin, et al.1996; Lieberman, et al.1988; Leighninger & Ellett, 1998; Lewandowski, 1998; Miller & Dore, 1991).

With de-professionalization, the quality of child welfare services has noticeably suffered (Costin, et al. 1996; Lieberman, et al.1988; Leighninger & Ellett, 1998; Lewandowski, 1998; Miller & Dore, 1991). To counter this trend, federal laws (a) The Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-272) and (b) The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (P.L. 105-89) were enacted to accord courts oversight of child welfare cases. With de-professionalization of child welfare, there has been an apparent shift of authority in decision making about vulnerable children and families, from child welfare professionals, to the courts. These laws have served to blur role boundaries between child welfare agencies and the judiciary, as well as to engender distrust of the professional judgement and capabilities of child welfare staff. The general perception of child welfare staff among social workers and other professionals, the judiciary, the public and the media is rather negative (Ellett & Steib, 2000).

Social Work Education

There is emerging evidence that indicates that child welfare staff who hold degrees in social work out perform individuals who hold other degrees. Findings in one

national study, (Lieberman, et al. 1988) and two statewide studies show that individuals with degrees in social work are better prepared in nearly all knowledge and skill bases, e.g. assessing risk, case planning, assessing child and family functioning, etc., than those with other degrees (Booz-Allen & Hamilton, 1987; Dhooper, Royse, & Wolfe, 1990). Albers, Reilly & Rittner, (1993) reported child welfare staff with social work degrees achieve more timely permanence for foster children than staff with other degrees. In a study conducted by the Child Welfare League of America, (1989) child welfare executives rated employees with MSWs as being more competent than their other staff. Olsen and Holmes (1982) found workers with social work degrees more effective than employees with other degrees.

Child welfare staff with social work degrees have higher retention and lower turnover rates than child welfare staff with other degrees (Dickinson & Perry, 1998; Hopkins, et al. 1999; Russell & Hornby, 1987; Smith & Laner, 1990). Nationally, Russell & Hornby (1987), reported a turnover rate in child welfare employees of 14 - 15% for staff holding a degree in social work and 23% for staff with all other degrees. Dickinson and Perry (1998) reported that child welfare staff in California who received their master of social work degrees with Title IV-E stipends had lower turnover rates than other employees. Texas reported a 67% retention for staff with SW degrees and an 87% retention rate for employees who had a field placement in a child welfare agency in fulfilling their BSW degree (McMahon, 1999). Thus, there appears to be a strong link between social work education, retention and professionalization in child welfare (Abramczyk, 1994; Costin, et al., 1996; Ellett & Millar, 1996; Leighninger & Ellett, 1997; Newlin & King, 1994; Perry, 2000; Univ. of Southern Maine, 1987).

Burnout & Turnover Studies

A number of studies have identified reasons for employee turnover in child welfare, (Anderson, 1994; Costin, et al. 1996; Dickinson & Perry, 1998; Drake & Yadama, 1996; Ellett, et al. 1996; Fryer, et al. 1989; Harrison, 1995; Helfgott, 1991; Jayaratne & Chess, 1986; Kern, et al. 1993; Lewandowski, 1998; McMahon, 1999; Midgley, et al. 1994; Pecora, et al. 1992; Russell & Hornby, 1987; Samantrai, 1992; U.S. Accounting Office, 1995; Walkey & Green, 1992). Some studies have targeted individuals after they have left child welfare employment and studies of these individuals yield information highly consistent with studies of those currently employed who have strongly expressed intentions of leaving child welfare (Ellett, 1995; Tett & Meyer, 1993). Studying those who make the career decision to leave child welfare for other kinds of employment has some obvious constraints. For example, time obviously can alter perceptions about job experiences and study participants may be reluctant to share negative perceptions and feelings about their prior employment. Others may have left child welfare due to unforseen factors such as family difficulties, and some individuals may simply be professionally incompetent or ill prepared in their jobs.

Taking a theory-based approach in this study was considered important because the vast majority of existing research on child welfare staff, has centered on the practice problems of turnover and characteristics of burnout believed by some to be antecedents of turnover (Aber, 1983; Anderson, 1994; Dickinson & Perry, 1998; Drake and Yadama, 1996; Fryer, et al. 1989; Harrison, 1995; Jayaratne & Chess, 1984 a,b; 1986; Kern, et al, 1993; Liederman, 1998; McMahon, 1999; Samantrai, 1992; Scully, 1983; Steel & Ovalle, 1984; Tett & Meyer, 1993). These studies have yielded rather

inconclusive results (Drake & Yadama, 1996; Söderfeldt, Söderfeldt, & Warg, 1995). While studies of employee turnover and burnout are of interest and have made contributions to the literature, they do not address important questions about the retention of employees. Nor are they useful for addressing important issues related to the preparation, recruitment, and mentoring of professional staff in child welfare. Additionally, no comprehensive framework to explore linkages between personal and organizational factors and retention in child welfare has been developed. This study provided an opportunity to begin the development of such a framework.

The Importance of Understanding Retention

Few studies have been conducted with identification of retention factors as their focus, thus, little is known about why individuals remain employed in child welfare (Cicero-Reese & Black, 1997; Dickinson & Perry, 1998; Helfgott, 1991; Jayaratne & Chess, 1984 a; Reagh, 1994; Rycraft, 1994; Vinokur-Kaplan, 1991). In this study, the decision was made to study retention, more specifically child welfare employees' expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare. The study was designed to address several conceptual issues and was expected to yield information important for the practice of child welfare, such as, recruitment, selection, retention, resiliency, mentoring, problems of turnover, staff development, quality of service delivery, and professionalization. This study tapped rich and relevant information from competent staff employed in child welfare. It is from this group that personal and organizational factors that impact staff retention are likely to be identified. While this study did not assess staff performance in relation to quality of client services, it is believed that staff

retention ultimately impacts the continuity and caliber of services child welfare agencies are able to provide children and families.

Line of Inquiry

This study extends a line of inquiry in social work concerned with factors related to employee turnover, burnout and persistence in child welfare settings. It focuses on a newly emerging line of inquiry about employees who remain employed in child welfare. The study differs in significant ways from prior research. For example:

1. the dependent variable in the study was child welfare staff's expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare rather than intent to leave, turnover or burnout typically investigated in a number of prior studies (Anderson, 1994; Costin, et al. 1996; Dickinson & Perry, 1998; Drake & Yadama, 1996; Ellett, et al. 1996; Fryer, et al. 1989; Harrison, 1995; Helfgott, 1991; Jayaratne & Chess, 1984, a, b, 1986; Kern, et al. 1993; Lewandowski, 1998; McMahon, 1999; Midgley, et al. 1994; Pecora, et al. 1992; Russell & Hornby, 1987; Samantrai, 1992; U.S. Accounting Office, 1995; Walkey & Green, 1992);
2. the variables examined were grounded in a conceptual framework that linked theory-based personal and organizational variables to retention and resiliency in child welfare settings;
3. other studies have examined worker attitudes and job satisfaction in relationship to turnover/intention to leave (Dickinson & Perry, 1998; Ellett, 1995; Fryer, et al., 1989; Jayaratne & Chess, 1984 a, b; Midgley, et al., 1994; Tett & Meyer, 1993; Vinokur-Kaplan, 1991), while this study examined dimensions of

professional organizational culture and their relationships to intentions to remain employed;

4. the study made major revisions to adapt and develop a multi-dimensional measure of elements of professional organizational culture to the social work context (Bobett, et al, 1998; Cavanagh, 1997; Ellett, Rugutt, & Cavanagh, 2000);

5. while there have been a few statewide studies examining turnover in child welfare (Booze-Allen & Hamilton, 1987; Dhooper, Royse, & Wolfe, 1990; Ellett, 1995; Kern, et al, 1993), this study was a multi-state study that provides somewhat greater generalizability of the results than prior studies and;

6. the few studies of staff retention in child welfare (Reagh, 1994; Rycraft, 1994) have been very small qualitative studies (n= 18 and 23 respectively), one small mixed methods study (Cicero-Reese & Black, 1997) (n = 38), plus one recent quantitative study (n = 127) of social workers specifically recruited, prepared and provided a stipend for a career in public child welfare (Dickinson & Perry, 1998). This study surveyed the entire child welfare staff population in two states.

Conceptual Framework

This section presents the conceptual framework in which this study was grounded. At the conceptual level, this study developed and tested a framework that includes personal variables, (human caring and self-efficacy), and an organizational variable, (professional organizational culture), in relation to staff intentions to remain employed in child welfare. Figure 1 illustrates the linkages and relationships between

the initial selection of employees, the work context and organizational outcomes. This figure illustrates the importance that selection plays in hiring employees who can function in the complex work environment which is embedded within the organization and substantially impacted by the external environment. For example, and from the efficacy perspective, selecting employees that have the "interests and skills matching that of the most successful members of a given occupation," results in greater "satisfaction with the chosen pursuit." (Bandura, 1997, p. 30). In figure 1, the work context is represented via three concentric circles. Public child welfare staff are the innermost circle and they are bounded by the organization, which is embedded within

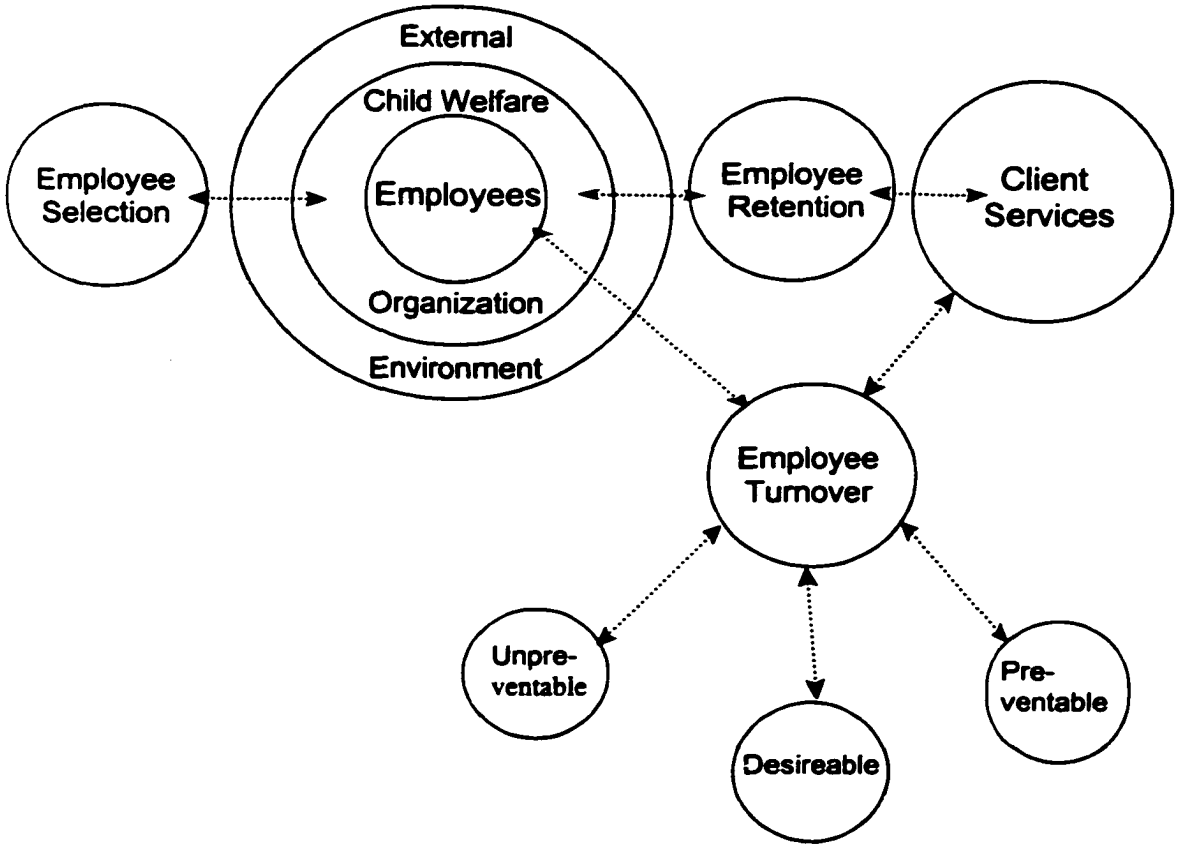

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

the external environment. Outcomes are employee retention and turnover of which there are three types: (a) unpreventable (e.g. spouse transferred out of area, retirement, death), (b) desirable (e.g. incompetent or malcontents) and (c) preventable (competent). The outcomes of staff retention and turnover are believed to ultimately have consequences for the quality of client services.

The layers of the work context appear in Figure 1 and are shown in further detail in Figure 2. The external environment consists of state and federal laws which govern

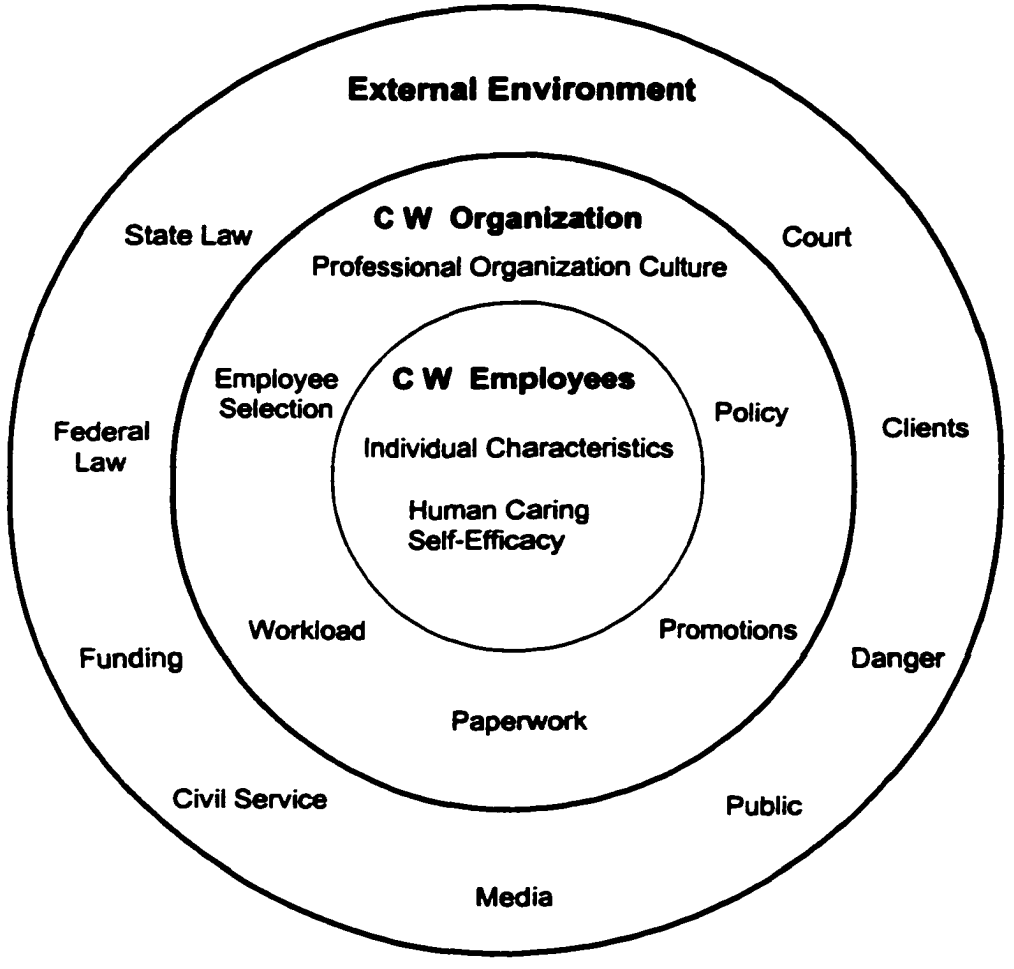

Figure 2 Child Welfare Work Context

child welfare policy making and practices, congressional and legislative funding, Civil Service/Merit Systems, public opinion, the media, clients, danger to staff, and the juvenile courts which hold the power of child custody determinations in addition to oversight of case planning. The organization implements state and federal legislation, establishes and implements agency policy, selects employees, determines workload assignments, sets goals for caseload standards, dictates required paperwork, makes decisions on employee promotions and impacts professional organizational culture. Figure 2 shows that child welfare employees are central to public child welfare and are so illustrated in Figure 2. According to Ewalt (1991), the single most important characteristic of a human services agency is the quality of its personnel. For example, a prior statewide study of personnel in Louisiana focused on intentions to leave child welfare and three of the four discriminating factors relating to staff decisions to leave were personal characteristics of self-efficacy and human caring (Ellett & Ellett 1997).

The actions of leaving child welfare employment or remaining might be considered polar opposites. However, for this study, motivational factors behind employees' intentions to remain employed or their intentions to leave employment are viewed as emanating from different personal and organizational factors. For example, the literature on burnout suggests people choose to leave due to psychological stress. However, many employees continue to work under stress because of factors such as high levels of professional commitment and strong concerns for the needs and feelings of clients. Organizationally, its clear that some staff leave child welfare because of limited promotional opportunities, while others remain employed under the same circumstances. In both cases, these stayers and leavers have similar levels of work

stress and limited promotional opportunities, but they arrive at different employment decisions for different reasons. Employees' expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare in this study are conceptualized as linked to cognitive and affective states arising from both personal characteristics (i.e., efficacy and human caring) and organizational factors (dimensions of professional organizational culture).

The conceptual model for the study is depicted in Figure 3. Presage variables, (i.e. what the employee brings to the job such as age, educational degree, gender and ethnicity), are linked to the personal variables of human caring and self-efficacy. There is a reciprocal relationship between caring and efficacy and professional organizational culture. These three independent variables are thought to contribute to ongoing cognitive, affective, and behavioral processes reflected in the work of child welfare staff. These dynamic processes in turn are linked to each employee's intent to remain employed in child welfare, the dependent variable in this study, which is subsequently linked to client services. Intent to remain and client services are outcomes in this conceptual model, although the quality of client services was not a variable in the study. Tett & Meyer (1993); and Steel & Ovalle (1984) have shown that employees' self-reported turnover intention is the strongest predictor of actual employee turnover. Intent to leave has also been used as a proxy for turnover in the psychology literature.

Prior to this study, there were no known large sample, multi-state studies in social work or child welfare that examine relationships among human caring, self-efficacy, professional organizational culture and employees' intentions to remain employed. The section that follows discusses this gap in knowledge in greater detail.

PRESAGE PROCESS OUTCOME

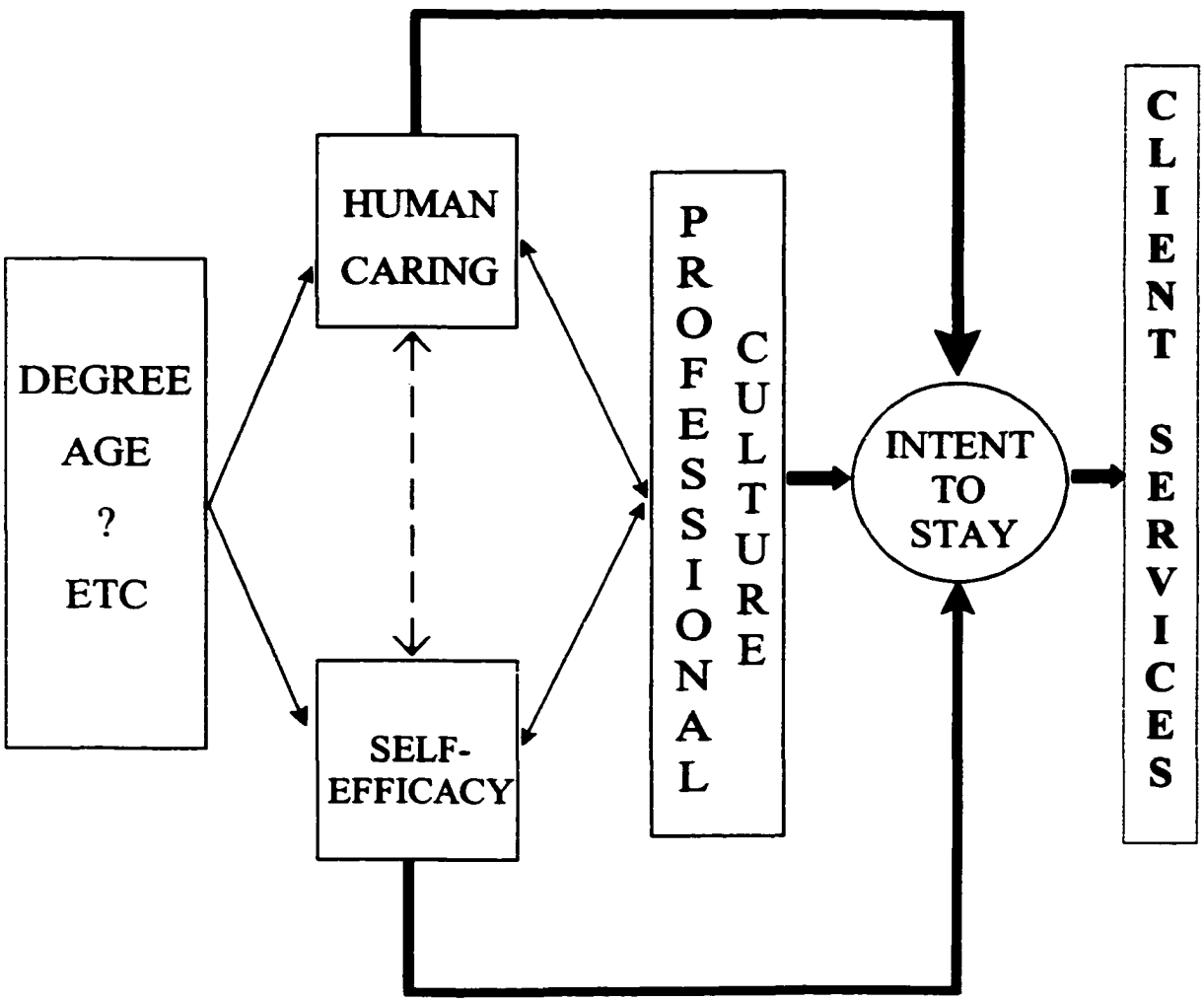

Figure 3. Conceptual Model

Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed in this research study was multi-faceted and had both personal/individual and organizational elements. There were significant gaps in knowledge related to staff retention in child welfare, (i.e. why staff continue child welfare employment) and little was known about intents to remain employed in child welfare and linkages between these intents and other personal characteristics and organizational culture variables. While some studies had identified reasons for employee turnover in child welfare, considerably less was known about why individuals remain employed in child welfare.

There were no known studies of organizational (work) cultures within the social work literature, including child welfare. Thus, there was a need to explore linkages between elements of organizational culture grounded in professional norms and competent employees' intents to remain employed, particularly in human services organizations like child welfare. There was also a need to develop a comprehensive measure of elements of child welfare organizational culture grounded in professional norms in social work. Likewise, there was a need to develop a self-efficacy measure specific to social work job tasks and elements of work. As well, there was a need to conceptually and operationally define the intent to remain employed variable in the social work literature, which had not previously been done.

Thus, the problem addressed in this research study was four-fold:

1. little was known about key factors that enhance retention of child welfare employees;

2 few, if any, comprehensive research-based attempts had been made to identify these factors and their importance in child welfare;

3. there were no conceptual models developed to better understand employment in child welfare as a complex personal and organizational phenomena; and

4. there were no known relevant measures of intent to remain employed, professional organizational culture, or self-efficacy in child welfare practice settings, including the area of child welfare.

The study addressed each of these important issues.

Purpose of the Study

The study was designed to examine linkages between a set of theoretically-grounded personal/psychological and organizational variables and expressed intentions to remain employed in public child welfare. The purpose of this study was to explore individual and organizational factors that were considered useful in explaining retention of professional personnel in public child welfare agencies. Thus, the purpose of this study was nine-fold:

1. to develop a measure of: (a) employee intent to remain (employed) and (b) self-efficacy specific to social work job tasks and work motivation;

2. to adapt and revise measures of (a) elements of professional organizational culture, and (b) human caring;

3. to examine the initial psychometric qualities (validity and reliability) of these three new measures;

4. to explore empirical linkages between elements of professional organizational culture and employee's intentions to remain employed in child welfare;

5. to explore empirical linkages between affective elements of human caring and employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare;
6. to explore empirical linkages between elements of self-efficacy and employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare;
7. to explore the construct of professional organizational culture *deprivation* as defined by differences between child welfare staffs' perceptions of *preferred* and *actual* elements of organizational culture and their linkages to employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare (see Rationale for Hypothesis 4);
8. to explore multivariate linkages between employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare and personal characteristics (self-efficacy and human caring) and organizational culture variables; and
9. to discuss implications of the findings from the study for application to theory, practice, and future research.

Significance/Importance of the Study

This study was significant and important from several perspectives. Currently there is a national call for the improvement of child welfare services as well as an expressed need to employ formally educated social workers to professionalize child welfare (Costin, et al. 1996; Ellett & Millar, 1996; Helfgott, 1991; Lieberman, et al. 1988; Pecora, et al.1989; Pecora, et al. 1992; Rittner & Wodarski, 1999; Zlotnik, 1998). A number of studies have documented a positive relationship between the educational background of social work staff and job performance in child welfare settings (Albers, Reilly, & Rittner, 1993; Baily 1978; Booz-Allen & Hamilton, Inc. 1987; CWLA, 1989; Dhooper, Royse, & Wolfe, 1990; Lieberman, et al.; Olsen & Holmes 1982;). However,

there is a paucity of research on public child welfare and retention. The complexity of the child welfare work context, combined with the challenges of serving families who themselves confront an array of increasingly complex social problems, demands a skilled professional workforce. The future ability of public child welfare systems to carry out their missions, goals, and legal mandates will depend upon recruiting and retaining competent staff. This study in part, addresses these issues.

This study is also important because the primary focus of most research on child welfare staff has been on turnover, especially burnout (Costin, et al. 1996; Drake & Yadama, 1996; Ellett, 1995; Fryer, et al., 1989; Helfgott, 1991; Jayaratne & Chess, 1986; Kern, et al. 1993; Pecora, et al. 1992; Russell & Hornby, 1987; Samantrai, 1992; Walkey & Green, 1992), rather than intent to remain employed in child welfare. It is important for child welfare organizations to learn why competent staff continue their employment, so that holding power for the workforce might be increased. Improved retention lowers fiscal costs associated with turnover and likely improves the organization's ability to carry out its mission with improved services to clients.

The study was considered timely given what is known about the age of professionals in child welfare in the state of Louisiana and the future need for child welfare professionals. An important, although somewhat unexpected finding in the 1995 Louisiana study (Ellett, 1995) and reaffirmed in this study, may have relevance to other state public child welfare agencies. In 1995, over 60% of professional level positions in Louisiana were held by employees over 40 years of age (that number increased to 67.7% of the respondents in this study), presumably a phenomenon of the baby boom generation. A large proportion of Louisiana's child welfare work force is

eligible for retirement in the next five to ten years. At the same time, the population of children in the United States is rising (Ozawa, 1997). If the trend in the last three decades of a growing number of abused and neglected children continues, there is a projected need to increase the number of child welfare staff. At the same time, some child welfare organizations may experience retirement of their most experienced and competent staff. For Louisiana, this implies a strong need to train, recruit, and retain large numbers of child welfare professionals in the years ahead.

The social work literature is devoid of studies that have attempted to expand our knowledge of linkages among theory rich psychological constructs (i.e. human caring and self-efficacy), and important organizational factors (i.e. professional culture), and retention in child welfare settings. This study was designed to provide insights into these relationships and to contribute to our understanding of employee retention in child welfare work settings. The variables studied were considered to be generalizable to other social work and human service organizations, such as schools, mental health centers, counseling agencies, nursing homes, etc.

The section that follows provides conceptual and operational definitions of the variables framing the study. More specific descriptions of various measures of the study variables can be found in Chapter 3 (Methodology).

Conceptual and Operational Definitions of the Study Variables

Independent Variables

Human Caring

Conceptual Definition. The construct of human caring in this study was borrowed from the original work of Moffett (1993) in her studies of human caring

characteristics of nurses. Based on a working definition provided by Benner & Wrubel, 1989, that caring reflects subjective feelings or attitudes which indicate that someone or something matters, and in an extensive review of the professional literature on human caring, Moffett conceptualized human caring as consisting of both affective components (caring *about* others), and professional knowledge and technical skills (to care *for* others). Both of these components are considered to interact to produce the care giving behavior of professionals in human services settings. This study only included measurement of the affective components of caring (i.e., caring about others). This study made no attempt to assess the professional knowledge and technical abilities to care for clients. Thus, caring is a complex psychological variable believed to be important in framing sensitivity and responsivity to the needs and feelings of others, personal and professional commitment, and ethical/moral behavior reflected in actions taken by child welfare professionals as they interact with the clients they serve (Moffett). Four independent dimensions of human caring were identified in Moffett's factor analysis of an affective measure of caring administered to professional nurses: (a) responsivity, (b) receptivity, (c) professional commitment, and (d) moral/ ethical consciousness. These dimensions were defined by Moffett as follows:

1. Responsivity is the tendency to be supportive, nurturing, and responsive to the needs of others.
2. Receptivity is the tendency of an individual to easily form relationships and to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.
3. Professional commitment refers to following a consistent course of action in order to fulfill values and goals within a specific professional context.

4. Moral/ethical consciousness is the tendency to treat others with human dignity and respect and to take responsibility for one's actions for the welfare of others.

Operational Definition. In this study, the operational definition of human caring was a revision of Moffett's (1993) Human Caring Inventory for Nurses (CIN) initially adapted to the social work context by Ellett (1995) in a statewide personnel needs study of child welfare professionals in Louisiana. This human caring measure [Human Caring Inventory-Social Work (HCI-SW)] was further modified for this study to assess self reports of personal caring reflecting three sub-constructs identified by Moffett: (a) responsivity to others, (b) receptivity to others, and (c) moral/ethical consciousness. The professional commitment factor was not included because it was considered somewhat tautological with the professional organizational culture measure of professional commitment used in this study.

Self-Efficacy

Conceptual Definition. For this study, the conceptual definition of self-efficacy was derived from the work of Bandura (1997) who defines self-efficacy as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to produce given attainments." (p.3).

Operational Definition. For this study, the Self-Efficacy Assessment - Social Work (SEA-SW), was designed and developed to incorporate Bandura's latest refinements to the self-efficacy construct (1997) as well as to be task specific to social work and child welfare jobs. It was designed to measure the strength of personal beliefs in one's capability to accomplish 17 particular work tasks and personal effort, persistence and resilience with regard to work tasks, and efficacy outcomes.

Professional Organizational Culture

Conceptual Definition. As used here, the conceptual definition of professional organizational culture refers to respondents' perceptions of the norms (both formal and informal), values, interests, and beliefs shared among members of an organization that emanate from established professional ethics and standards that guide individual and collective behavior of organizational members. Professional culture frames organizational members' sense of who we are as professionals and what we do around here. Three independent dimensions of professional culture identified through large-scale factor analyses of a measure originally designed for teachers (Davis, Ellett, & Rugutt, 1999; Ellett, et al, 2000) were addressed in this study of child welfare staff: (a) Vision/Leadership, (b) Collegial Teaching and Learning, and (c) Professional Commitment. These dimensions were conceptually defined as follows:

1. Vision/Leadership: refers to respondents' perceptions of shared norms, values, interests and beliefs among child welfare staff about what the agency aspires to become and the various roles and responsibilities agency personnel have relative to accomplishing agency goals.
2. Collegial Teaching and Learning: refers to respondents' perceptions of shared norms, values, interests and beliefs among child welfare staff about the quantity and quality of interpersonal and professional interactions, and relationships among staff that enhance personal and collective teaching and learning opportunities within the organization as a total learning community.
3. Professional Commitment: refers to respondents' perceptions of shared norms, values, interests and beliefs among child welfare staff about the extent to which

everyday work activities are framed by professional ethics and codes of conduct, and reflect child welfare practices designed to improve the quality of services for advancing the lives of children and families in society.

Operational Definition. The operational definition of professional culture in this study was derived from the initial work of Cavanagh (1997) and his development of the School Culture Elements Questionnaire (SCEQ), subsequent revisions of the SCEQ reflected in the work of Olivier, et al. (1998), and most recently in the work of Davis, et al. (1999), and Ellett, et al. (2000). The SCEQ required major revisions to adapt it to the social work and child welfare context as the new Professional Organizational Culture Questionnaire -Social Work (POCQ-SW). The initial form of the SCEQ used in this study, measured three sub-constructs reflecting Shared Vision/Leadership, Collegial Teaching and Learning, and Professional Commitment.

Dependent Variable

Intent to Remain Employed in Child Welfare

Conceptual Definition. The conceptual definition of employee intent to remain employed in child welfare is derived from a larger understanding of the personal, psychological and work context factors encompassing cognitive, affective and behavioral elements that contribute to the holding power of the child welfare work context for the employee and to the organizational culture. From this perspective, individuals who desire to remain employed in child welfare make a personal determination to persist in child welfare because the career benefits centered on professional growth and self actualization, professional purpose and mission, professional needs gratification, and the importance of their work, are valued more than

other job factors such as financial incentives, characteristics of the general work environment and associated work tensions and frustrations.

Operational Definition. For this study, intent to remain employed in child welfare was operationalized by the Intent to Remain Employed - Child Welfare (IRE-CW). No measures of this variable were identified in the literature review for the study. Therefore, the IRE-CW was specifically designed for use in this study.

Research Hypotheses

This research was designed to fill gaps in the existing knowledge base about linkages among important personal and organizational variables and employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare. The theoretical base pertaining to the study variables and the extant literature provided some guidance to develop predictive hypotheses of relationships among the variables that could be reasonably justified. Therefore, a set of research hypotheses derived from issues in the literature reviewed, and from the conceptualization of the study variables, was explicated for primary, expected outcomes of the study. Each of the hypotheses framing the study is presented below, and each is followed by a conceptual rationale linking the independent and dependent variables.

Hypothesis 1

There is a statistically significant ($p<.05$), positive relationship between professional child welfare staff members' self-reported levels of human caring and their expressions of intents to remain employed in public child welfare.

Rationale. The only known related study that explored human caring and expressed intent to leave public child welfare employment was the Ellett, et al. study

(1996). In this study, the human caring dimension of responsivity to clients was identified as one of four factors that statistically discriminated between extreme groups among all child welfare staff with high and low intents to leave employment in child welfare. Additionally, elements of human caring were the only factors that differentiated high and low intents to leave employment in child welfare between extreme groups of child welfare employees with three or fewer years of employment (Ellett, et al.).

While human caring has not been systematically researched in social work, the practice and profession of social work have always identified with the helping professions and the importance of caring about clients (Tucker, 1996). The hypothesis suggests that individuals who score high on human caring would have high frustration tolerance, be able to depersonalize job stresses, and stay focused on work outcomes which they find personally rewarding and satisfying, all of which served to reinforce caring about their clients and their work in child welfare (Cicero-Reese & Black, 1997; Reagh, 1994; Rycraft, 1994). Thus, individuals with high levels of human caring would be expected to develop strong values and beliefs in providing services to abused and neglected children, find the work both personally and professionally rewarding, and be more inclined to remain employed in child welfare than those with low levels of human caring (Cicero-Reese & Black; Reagh & Rycraft). While levels of human caring are expected to differ among any new cohort of child welfare professionals, the hypothesis suggests that human caring interacts with, and is subsequently fostered by the nature of job-related experiences with supervisors, other professionals and clients served

(Dickinson & Perry, 1998; Kern, et al., 1993; Moffett, 1993; Reagh; Rycraft; Samantrai, 1992).

Hypothesis 2

There is a statistically significant ($p<.05$), positive relationship between child welfare staff members' self-reported self-efficacy levels and their expressions of intents to remain employed in child welfare.

Rationale. The only known study exploring self-efficacy and expressed employment intentions in public child welfare employment showed that self-efficacy was one of four factors discriminating between child welfare staff with high and low intentions to leave employment in child welfare (Ellett, et al. 1996). This hypothesis is conceptually tenable because individuals with strong self-efficacy beliefs, have confidence in their abilities to make a positive difference in the lives of their clients (Bandura, 1997; Reagh, 1994; Rycraft, 1994), have greater motivation to persist when faced with barriers to goal accomplishment (Bandura), and do not desist in attempts to accomplish goals when faced with instances of failure to accomplish goals (Bandura). Self-efficacy develops from enactive mastery experiences, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states (Bandura). Thus, because of strong efficacy beliefs and attendant persistence in goal accomplishment, these individuals may be more likely to experience success in their jobs than those with low self-efficacy (Bandura). This hypothesis suggests that successful job experiences (enactive mastery, observing competent staff, receiving verbal feedback from supervisors, and experience physiological and affective states in the course of their work), develop strong motivation tied to the work context, such as, professional self actualization (Bandura),

in ways that encourage, sustain, and strengthen intentions to remain employed in child welfare. According to Bandura, individuals with low self-efficacy do not persist in their efforts to overcome barriers to goal accomplishment, develop a sense of failure and lack of personal confidence in attaining goals, and are less likely to be successful with clients with difficult problems (which serves to further lower efficacy).

Hypothesis 3

There is a statistically significant ($p<.05$), positive relationship between child welfare staff members' perceptions of professional organizational culture and their expressions of intents to remain employed in child welfare.

Rationale. When individuals do not feel supported or valued by the organization, negative attitudes toward the organization increase, as does the likelihood of seeking other employment (Ellett, et al. 1996; Helfgott, 1991; Hopkins, et al, 1999; Jayaratne and Chess, 1986; Kern, et al. 1993; Samantrai 1992; Tett & Meyer 1993).

Hoy and Miskel (1996) report that cohesiveness among organizational members and organizational commitment emanate from a strong organizational culture which likely improves employee retention. If this is the case, this hypothesis seems tenable. As an organization builds supportive organizational structures and develops a professional organizational culture that supports the selection, mentoring and retention of competent personnel (Schneider, Goldstein & Smith, 1995), the holding power of the organization for employees will increase.

Hypothesis 4

There is a statistically significant ($p<.05$), negative relationship between child welfare staff members' perceptions of professional organizational culture deprivation and their expressions of intents to remain employed in child welfare.

Rationale. Teachers employed in an organization with a strong professional culture with shared social work norms, values, interests, beliefs and commonality of purpose among its members, are likely to experience clarity about their job roles and responsibilities and organizational leadership and vision, a strengthened sense of collegiality with supervisors and other staff, and a heightened awareness of professional commitment to teaching (Cavanagh, 1997; Davis, Ellett, & Rugutt, 2000 and Olivier, et al 1998). This has particularly been the case with teachers when the actual perceived levels of desirable elements of organizational culture are strong, and when they match desired strengths of elements of organizational culture as well (Cavanagh; Davis, Ellett, & Rugutt; and Olivier, et al.). These findings for teachers should generalize to other helping professions such as child welfare. Perceived deprivation in cultural elements among child welfare employees occurs when the strength of desired cultural elements is greater than the strength of actual cultural elements (Cavanagh) (see Study Survey in Appendix B). When professional elements of culture are strong, and when cultural deprivation as perceived by child welfare staff is low, it is believed that the quality of relations among child welfare staff is strengthened through the development of shared norms, beliefs and values, and subsequent job motivators and intentions to remain employed in child welfare are strengthened.

Perceived decision deprivation (an element of culture) has been shown in other research contexts, for example, to be associated with general work alienation and lowered employee performance (Johnson, 1990). Thus, the perception of high professional culture deprivation in the child welfare organization is thought to be predictive of low intentions to remain employed in child welfare.

Hypothesis 5

The combination of child welfare staff members' personal and professional organizational culture perceptions accounts for significantly ($p < .05$) more variation in their expressions of intents to remain employed in child welfare than either of these factors considered alone.

Rationale. This hypothesis is a multivariate (statistical regression) hypothesis. Given the rationales provided for the viability of the first four hypotheses, a multivariate analysis, i.e. statistical regression of the dependent variable, Child Welfare Intent to Remain Employed (IRE-CW) on the independent variables (human caring, self-efficacy, professional organizational culture measures), should demonstrate incremental changes in the multiple correlation from one step in the analysis to the next step in the analysis. A specific prediction about the ordering of the independent variables is not made because of lack of theoretical grounds for such a prediction. However, based upon prior research in child welfare (Ellett, 1995), hospital (Moffett, 1993), and education settings (Cavanagh, 1997), it was expected that the personal variables of human caring (HCI-SW) and self-efficacy (SEA-SW) would account for significantly more variation in child welfare employees' intentions to remain in child welfare (IRE-CW scores) than dimensions comprising the professional organizational culture measure (POCQ-SW).

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the child welfare context, relevant literature upon which this study was developed, a conceptual framework for the study variables, the problem(s) to be addressed, the purpose and significance/importance of the study, conceptual and operational definitions of the major study variables, plus

predictive research hypotheses and their rationales. The section that follows presents a more detailed review of literature pertinent to the context of the study and the study variables.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature review in this chapter addresses the general concerns about research on child welfare staff, as well as the conceptual and research base for the variables that frame this study, i.e. intent to remained employed in child welfare, human caring, self-efficacy and professional organizational culture.

There has been historical concern in the extant literature with the problem of employee turnover and burnout in child welfare (Aber, 1983; Anderson, 1994; Dickinson & Perry, 1998; Drake and Yadama, 1996; Fryer, et al. 1989; Harrison, 1995; Jayaratne & Chess, 1984 a,b; 1986; Kern, et al, 1993; Liederman, 1998; McMahon, 1999; Samantrai, 1992; Scully, 1983; Tett & Meyer, 1993). Additionally, there is literature that suggests that specific preparation in social work better prepares staff for work in child welfare than preparation in other academic/professional areas (Albers, Reilly, & Rittner, 1993; Booz-Allen & Hamilton, 1987; CWLA, 1989; Dhooper, Royse, & Wolfe, 1990; Olsen & Holmes, 1982). At the same time, there is national concern about the de-professionalization of child welfare (Costin, et al.,1996; Lieberman, Russell & Hornby, 1988; Leighninger & Ellett, 1998; Lewandowski, 1998; Miller & Dore, 1991). There has been a call to re-professionalize child welfare though formal academic training in social work (Abramczyk, 1994; Costin, et al., 1996; Ellett & Millar, 1996; Newlin & King, 1994; Leiberman, et al., 1988; Pecora, et al. 1989; Perry, 2000; Terpstra, 1992; Univ. of Southern Maine, 1987). Newer, more innovative approaches to providing organizational support for new child welfare employees and those experiencing job difficulties in other professions have also been recommended (Ellett, 1995; Collins, 1994; Helfgott, 1991; Ingersoll, 1997; Scully, 1983). Thus, the

national view of child welfare as an area of practice, within the social work profession, and as an important societal structure designed to serve children and families in need, is currently receiving much scrutiny and discussion (Leighninger & Ellett, 1998; Lewandowski, 1998; Rittner & Wodarski, 1999).

The problem of child welfare employee turnover and burnout has been a particular focus in the literature over the past three decades (Aber, 1983; Anderson, 1994; Dickinson & Perry, 1998; Drake and Yadama, 1996; Fryer, et al. 1989; Harrison, 1995; Jayaratne & Chess, 1984 a,b; 1986; Kern, et al, 1993; Liederman, 1998; McMahon, 1999; Samantrai, 1992; Scully, 1983; Tett & Meyer, 1993). Research studies designed to better understand the holding power of social work organizations and personal and organizational factors related to employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare, however, are rather limited (Cicero-Reese & Black, 1997; Dickinson & Perry; Helfgott, 1991; Jayaratne & Chess, 1984 a; Reagh, 1994; Rycraft, 1994; Vinokur-Kaplan, 1991). Much of the retention literature is in the form of recommendations, is speculative or includes only small scale research studies. Studies of turnover and burnout may not be as useful as those concerned with issues of retention of competent child welfare staff. What motivates child welfare employees to continue providing quality professional services to children and families in need, in light of a most difficult work context? What has been the yield of the literature addressing the problem of employee turnover and burnout in child welfare?

The literature reviewed suggests that burnout, though a complex construct, may be understood as the response of individuals who are possibly untrained for, ill-suited for, have unreasonable expectations of the work in the field of child welfare, are unable

to strike a balance between the demands of their work and their personal lives, or who feel overwhelmed and incompetent once in the job (Cicero-Reese & Black, 1998; Ellett, 1995; Ellett, 1999; Reagh, 1994; Rycraft, 1994).

Burnout may be, as well, a much overused term. As an explanatory construct, burnout in child welfare has been used by some who lack knowledge, skills and abilities as a means of personal face-saving when making the decision to leave a difficult professional job. This conclusion on burnout coincides with a review of the literature in social work in general conducted by Söderfeldt, et al. (1995) in which they found that social workers were no more likely than others in comparable employment to experience burnout. They conclude that by saying "one is *burned out*" is a socially acceptable way to give up or withdraw from a job. Coincidently, concern for burnout in child welfare appears to have begun in the literature concomitant with a national movement to declassify child welfare positions and change entering level professional degree(s) and related professional experience(s) requirements (Ellett, 1999). Consequently, 72% of employees in public child welfare currently lack formal social work degrees (Lieberman, et al. 1988). Therefore, turnover and burnout are not the focus of this study. The focus of this study is understanding selected personal and organizational factors associated with employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare.

Research Related to Staff Retention

As previously stated and as a rationale for this study, retention factors have been little studied in the context of child welfare organizations. Employee turnover and burnout have been more frequently the focus of research in child welfare. Those

studying burnout and turnover have made a variety of recommendations to help ameliorate burnout and turnover. For example, Pines and Maslach, (1978) recommend time away from direct client contact, and Maslach, (1979) recommends the development of worker mutual support groups to cope with job stress as solutions to burnout. Scully (1983) recommends that support groups designed to aid in the prevention of burnout in the human services professions should possess the following (all of which it can be argued are reflective of a professional organizational culture):

1. norms that permit discussion, analysis and problem solving related to stressful events,
2. group leaders that have administrative support and leaders that can model empathy,
3. group members who can participate in self reflection, and
4. a function within the organizational structure that provides competent leadership and needed resources.

There is some research to document these recommendations. For example, participants assigned child protection cases completing a pre-post survey of interdisciplinary support groups (professional culture) reported "gained confidence in their insight, ability to cope with the emotional burden of their jobs, and their skills in interaction with families and colleagues" (Krell, Richardson, Terence, & Kairys, 1983 p. 537) .

Aber (1983) reports consultants hired by a Massachusetts commission to plan the new department of child welfare made recommendations to reduce stress and prevent burnout. Recommendations that seem relevant today include: manageable caseloads, improved quality of supervision, reduction in unnecessary regulations and

paperwork, improved pay to attract higher quality applicants, implementation of career development programs, and advanced training and professional growth, and improved physical working conditions. These and similar recommendations have also been made by Seaberg (1982),

Based upon findings from a national study that individuals with social work degrees report higher levels of competence than staff with non-social work degrees, Lieberman, et al. (1988) recommend employing individuals with formal social work degrees and establishing respite assignments for staff to improve recruitment and retention. States that worked collaboratively with schools of social work and that provided staff development opportunities, reported the lower turnover, or conversely, higher retention rates (Russell & Hornby, 1987.). Higher retention rates of graduates of university/agency Title IV-E collaborative partnerships over other new hires are also now beginning to appear in the literature (Brown & Chavkin, 2000; Dickinson & Perry, 1998; Hopkins, et al. 1999; Lewandowski, 1998, Gansle & Ellett, 1997; Harris, 1996; Okamura, & Jones, 1998; Zlotnik, 1998).

In a small qualitative exploratory study of 23 child welfare caseworkers whose average length of employment was 11 years, Rycraft (1994) identified four factors influencing retention. These were (a) goodness of fit of worker skills, interests, and the specific job responsibilities with professional knowledge, skill and ability; (b) mission, i.e. caseworker commitment to helping others especially abused/neglected children and their families, and overcoming barriers to provide intervention; (c) supportive supervision appropriate to worker skill level and experience; and (d) personal and professional investment in public child welfare and the agency in them.

Though measured quite differently, the findings of the Rycraft study conceptually reflect the three independent variables investigated in this study.

Through written life histories, results of the Maslach Burnout Inventory, and interviews of 18 public child welfare workers, Reagh (1994) found that child welfare workers who remain in child welfare typically: (a) were altruistic, (c) were personally identified with public child welfare; (b) had a desire to make a difference; (d) found meaning in their work; (e) felt a strong sense of accomplishment; (f) saw themselves as constantly growing and learning; (g) received support from their colleagues; and (h) had a strong need to feel valued/rewarded/appreciated. Reagh also identified a very fine line between staying and leaving and these characteristics. That is, all workers in the study had experienced burnout at some level. Staying and leaving work in child welfare were not viewed as opposites, but were viewed as decisions that were only different depending upon the way the individual processes work experiences. The workers interviewed in the Reagh study also recommended that mature workers could effectively serve as mentors for new staff to improve retention rates.

To document the importance of mentoring to employee retention, Collins (1994) conducted a survey among 631 social workers who provided internship supervision of MSW students in 300 human services settings. She was interested in examining whether mentorship had a similar positive impact on career development as had been shown to be the case in business and education settings, and in the organizational and developmental psychology literatures. Her results showed that both the mentor and protégée roles in mentoring settings had a significant impact on career success, career

satisfaction and income levels for the mentor and protégée, when these individuals were compared to those who had not participated in a mentorship.

Marks & Hixon (1986) provide additional data to support the importance of organizational practices to prevent turnover and enhance retention of employees. Peer group supervision was an intervention implemented in the Erie, Pennsylvania public child welfare office for the purposes of improving services, enhancing staff skills and preventing burnout. After one year, a preliminary evaluation survey was administered to participating staff. The results showed concern by the agency about leadership, training, and professional growth and their relationships to burnout prevention. Staff also reported reduced stress when the agency recognized the complexity of cases and decisions that staff were entrusted to make.

In summarizing the literature reviewed related to retention in public child welfare, only a few, small qualitative studies have attempted to empirically identify or discuss factors related to retention (Reagh, 1994; Rycraft, 1994). More recently, small studies of Title IV-E graduates have begun to appear in the literature (Brown & Chavkin, 2000; Cicero-Reese & Black, 1997; Dickinson & Perry, 1998; Gansle, & Ellett, 1997; Hopkins, et al., 1999). The literature reflects a variety of recommendations about improving retention in child welfare, but few actual research studies and no large scale studies, quantitative or qualitative are included. Thus, a lot of professional advice about ways in which retention might be enhanced and turnover prevented is available. However, few quantitative studies to provide an empirical basis for this advice, have been completed.

Human Caring

Human caring has long been considered an important personal and professional characteristic of the behavior of those employed in the helping professions i.e., medicine, social work, teaching, counseling, etc. (Tucker, 1996). While there are a variety of perspectives about how human caring should/can be conceptualized, and though few comprehensive measures of human caring have been developed, this construct has received considerable historical attention in the literatures concerned with altruistic behavior (Moffett, 1993). Recent research centered on altruism and altruistic motivation, of which empathy is an important factor, provides empirical support for different kinds of altruism, depending upon the motivation underlying helping behavior (Batson, Fultz, & Schoenrade, 1987). Likewise, human caring has two distinct dimensions, i.e. the knowledge and technical skill to care *for* others, in addition to the affective dimension of caring *about* others.

Human Caring and Altruism

Understanding the complexities of human caring as a basis for developing theories of motivation has received considerable attention in experimental settings in social psychology. One core issue in research on human caring has been how the motivational basis for caring can be best understood. For example, Batson, et al. (1987) view prosocial motivation as altruistic when the intent is oriented toward another's welfare. Said another way, the ultimate goal of altruism, according to Batson (1990) is the capacity to value and pursue another's welfare for their sake and not for our own personal reasons. Empathy is a requisite element of altruistic caring. According to Batson, et al. (1987) (see also Batson, 1990), since the 1970's, empathy has been

defined as "one specific set of congruent emotions, those feelings that are more other-focused than self-focused" (p. 20). Batson, et al. (1987) further explain "the construct of empathy may be located conceptually at several different points in the network of interpersonal cognition and emotion" (p. 19). They state that, "one specific form of emotional empathy (is) other-focused feelings evoked by perceiving another person in need" (p.19). They find there are two "congruent emotional responses to perceiving another in need: feelings of personal distress (e.g. alarmed, upset, worried, disturbed, distressed, troubled, etc.) which are more self-focused, and feelings of empathy (e.g., sympathetic, moved, compassionate, tender, warm, softhearted, etc.)" which are more other-focused (1987, p. 19). They conclude that there are distinct motivations behind empathy and personal distress leading to helping behavior.

Egoism (the personal perspective that we are only capable of caring about ourselves and that we value others' welfare only to the degree that it affects our own) is the motivation to relieve personal distress. Conversely, the ultimate motivation underlying altruistic empathy is to relieve the other's need. In a review of recent theory and research on altruism, Piliavin and Charng (1990) report an apparent paradigm shift from the egoist to the true altruist viewpoint of its existence.

From a recent review of the literature on human caring, Moffett, (1993) concluded that little research had been conducted on caring as it relates to the human services professions. While human caring is generally viewed as requisite for successful practice in nursing, teaching, counseling, social work and other human services professions, empirical research on the construct of caring and these professions is just emerging. Altruism has been studied more extensively than human caring.

Simmons (1991) concludes that altruism has been trivialized in science through technological and ideological arguments stripping the fun and meaning out of it. In her view, altruism is one process which helps glue society together. Batson (1990) suggests that it is the capacity for altruistic empathy that is at the heart of human caring, a construct he believes that social psychology has too long overlooked.

Mohan (1988) refers to the axiological basis or values for the logic of social welfare which is a kind of societal altruism for oppressed groups within society. Sociological research on altruism has focused on relationships and structures within society. Sociobiologists propose that altruism is genetically based, with evidence that altruism is adaptive. Parental care for and protection of their children are examples. In their review of the literature on altruism, Piliavin & Charng (1990) and Simmons (1991), cite that kidney and bone-marrow donation studies show that the closer the relationship between the donor and recipient, the more likely donation. However, altruism is viewed by these researchers as learned rather than innate.

Can Caring and Altruism be Measured?

Social psychologists as well as sociologists, economists, political scientists and sociobiologists have studied human caring and altruism in experimental settings. Batson alone has conducted over 40 studies on altruism and empathy, therefore, altruism and human caring have been operationalized and measured. For example, Wolfe (1986) identified traits and behaviors that he believed to be indicative of human caring such as attentive listening, patience, responsibility, sensitivity, touch, honesty, comforting and respect. He subsequently used these traits to develop the *Caring*

Behaviors Inventory. Many of these concepts are recognized as vital for effective social work practice.

Moffett (1993) observed how graduates from nurse education programs acquired the basic technical knowledge, skill, and ability to care for patients. She speculated that affective caring or caring about patients distinguished outstanding nurses from other nurses. In her study of 734 registered nurses from 14 randomly selected acute care hospitals, Moffett used extensive factor analyses to identify four factors defining the affective components of human caring (caring about) in the nursing context (professional commitment, moral/ethical consciousness, responsivity, and receptivity) . According to Moffett, these four factors are not completely independent of one another since human caring is a global construct, with identifiable, but dynamically interrelated dimensions. It is not likely, for example, that one would exhibit strong sensitivity to the needs and feelings of others and little or no receptivity. Cognitive and affective features of human caring are thought to influence personal attitudes towards clients and coworkers, and core values and beliefs which are considered essential for caring within the helping professions. Empathy and nurturance for example, are integral to both responsivity and receptivity to the needs and feelings of others.

The conceptual framework reflected in Moffett's (1993) study is grounded in humanistic perspectives comprised of affective, cognitive and behavioral elements. This framework that assumes that both cognitive and affective elements of caring must be realized for appropriate caring behaviors to occur. Thus, a human services professional needs to possess the professional knowledge necessary to care for (perhaps similar to personal distress) those served, as well as the attitudes, values, beliefs and

feelings to care about (altruistic empathy) those served. The only known research study on human caring and employment in social work settings, is the Ellett, et al. (1996) study of child welfare, which found the single factor differentiating new employees' strong and weak intents to leave was human caring. Those with strong intents to leave employment in child welfare were low on self reported levels of human caring.

There has been some discussion in the literature about whether human caring and altruism are innate or learned. Some sociobiologists, for example, have taken the position that altruism is wired and genetically programed in humans (Hoffman, 1981; Smithson, Amato & Pearce, 1983). Conversely, in a review of the literature on altruism, Piliavin and Charng (1990), could find little evidence for an altruistic personality. Piliavin and Charng reported no gender differences in helping behavior at high levels of harm, though women were more likely to intervene at low levels of harm. Women evaluated themselves as more empathetic than did men. Further, helping behavior increased and became internalized as children mature. Thus, the processes in the development of altruism may include social learning through observing others (modeling), parental child-rearing practices, and experiential learning. It is unlikely that altruistic caring is innate, but learned and adaptive (Piliavin & Charng). For instance, very young children do not act altruistically, but altruism develops with increased age and parental training. Whether innate or learned, human caring has been identified as making important contributions to the decision to leave employment in child welfare organizations (Ellett, 1995).

Professional Organizational Culture

Organizational Climate and Culture

For the last two decades, there has been considerable and rich debate about the nature of, and distinctions between, organizational climate and organizational culture. At issue is whether these constructs are similar, distinct, or interrelated. The debate has centered as well on the epistemological basis of these constructs and appropriate research methodologies for investigating them (i.e., quantitative VS qualitative methods). There have been recent calls for the importance of conducting research on the nature of these two important constructs, clarifying theoretical perspectives about these constructs, developing more adequate measures of these constructs and studying the importance of these constructs to organizations' workforce, characteristics, functions, operations and goals (Denison, 1996; Reichers and Schneider, 1990; Rousseau, 1990; Schein, 1992).

Organizational climate studies emerged in the 1950s, and proliferated with relatively little time or attention devoted to either clear construct development or construct validation (Denison, 1996; Reichers and Schneider, 1990). Organizational climate studies grew out of interest in organizational effectiveness which employed quantitative methods. Organizational climate has been defined as the shared perceptions of policy, procedures and practices that rewards, supports and expects within an organization, the way things are (Reichers & Schneider; Schneider, 1990; Schneider, White & Paul, 1998).

Organizational culture has been defined as a pattern of socially constructed basic assumptions, values and beliefs that the group learns that influences artifacts, forms,

behaviors, espoused values, and attitudes (Denison, 1996; Rousseau, 1990; Reichers & Schneider, 1990; Schein, 1992; Trice & Beyer, 1993). Culture studies emerged from anthropological notions which employed qualitative methods of observation, interview, and document review that were primarily focused on construct development (Denison; Rousseau; Reichers & Schneider; Schein; Trice & Beyer). Climate studies have traditionally been associated with the use of quantitative methodologies.

Organizational culture research began to proliferate and has been rather prominent in the professional literatures of psychology, management, and education in the 1980s . This literature has developed in response to the recognition that there was something more about organizations than that which was captured by organizational climate studies (Denison, 1996; Rousseau, 1990; Reichers & Schneider, 1990; Schein, 1992; Schneider, 1987; Trice & Beyer, 1993). Studies of organizational culture however, have not been prominent or systematically studied in the child welfare context.

Organizational culture is generally viewed as a more global construct than climate and is considered to manifest organizational climate, (i.e. climate emanates from organizational culture). While there is acknowledged overlap between these two constructs, it is generally held that they are relatively distinct entities (Denison, 1996; Hoy & Miskel, 1996; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1996; Rousseau, 1990; Reichers & Schneider, 1990; Schein, 1992; Trice & Beyer, 1993). One straightforward distinction between these two constructs is presented by Hoy and Miskel. Organizational climate reflects shared perceptions of organizational members' behavior, while organizational culture reflects shared assumptions, values, and norms among organizational members.

Literatures in education and psychology have identified the development and maintenance of professional culture as a key element of school organizational change, improvement and effectiveness (Fullan, 1993).

There is some disagreement about whether organizational culture represents an organization-wide consensus among organizational members, the integration perspective held by Schein (1992) and Deal and Kennedy (1982), or whether organizational culture is best understood as collectives of various subcultures as in the differentiation perspective held by Martin and Frost (1996). Other models of organizational culture have also ranged from the cultural fragmentation to the postmodern perspective (Martin and Frost). From another conception of culture in organizations, Rousseau (1990) views culture as "something an organization is," and elements of culture are viewed as "layered from readily accessible to difficult to assess." This perspective suggests the need for using both quantitative and qualitative methods to make subunit comparisons and to more thoroughly understand the complexities of organizational culture.

Professional Organizational Culture in Child Welfare

If Schneider, Goldstein & Smith (1995) are correct about factors contributing to employee retention in organizations, then decisions of organizational heads pertaining to employee qualifications and selection procedures to best meet agency goals will significantly influence the professional culture in child welfare organizations. Thus, selecting competent, professionally committed employees in child welfare may be a first concern in reducing employee turnover. The value placed on employees' professional credentialing and licensing requirements, procedures that symbolize excellence, and

personal recognition, tangible rewards, career incentives, professional activities, in-service training, and other organizational supports for employees, are all elements of fostering the development and maintenance of a professional organizational culture in child welfare (Ellett, et al. 1996; Hopkins, et al. 1999). It is known for example, that states that have established the BSW or MSW degree for child welfare practice as a minimum requirement for initial employment, experience greater employee retention rates (Dickinson & Perry, 1998; Hopkins, et al. 1999; Russell & Hornby, 1987; Smith & Laner, 1990). Likewise, findings in one national and two statewide studies indicate that child welfare staff who hold degrees in social work out perform individuals who hold other degrees (Albers, et al. 1993; Booz-Allen and Hamilton, 1987; CWLA, 1989; Dhooper, et al. 1990; Lieberman, et al. 1988). Thus, lack of adequate preparation for professional work in child welfare settings, coupled with increased job demands and insufficient opportunities for building professional organizational culture, may be strong factors contributing to high rates of employee turnover in child welfare (Costin, et al. 1996; Ellett, et al. 1996; Helfgott, 1991; Pecora, et al, 1992).

Support and mentoring of new employees also seems of considerable importance in retaining employees. In most states, following initial employee selection, there is a period of formal pre-service training in the first six months of employment including induction and orientation to child welfare. Beyond initial training, however, there is little coordinated emphasis on mentoring and support of these employees. The importance of mentoring and support to both competent practice and employee retention has been recognized in many professions (Collins, 1994).

From a different perspective, O'Reilly and Chatman (1995) do not agree with Schneider, et al. (1995), that selection and person-job fit manage behavior in organizations. They hold a more functional view of organizational culture that posits that organizational members will respond not only to formal control through compliance with specified policies and rewards, but also to social control through behavior consistent with expected social norms and values influenced by peer relations. From this perspective, developing a professional culture within child welfare organizations that recognizes the importance of both the formal and informal organization seems an important goal for child welfare agencies.

The adaptability of organizational cultures and the role of capable leadership personnel (rather than the absolute strength of the culture) have also been noted as important to develop organizational success or to change organizations in positive ways. In adaptive organizational cultures, the role of leader/managers is viewed as an important element of organizational success and is articulated through leader/manager values, e.g., caring about people, and behaviors, e.g., willing to take risks, attending to all constituent concerns (Kotter & Heskett, 1998). Child welfare organizations are dynamic and are constantly having to adapt to pressures internal and external to the work environment, (e.g. unpredictable crises with clients and ever-changing legal mandates and policies). Thus, a professional organizational culture characterized by adaptive leaders with strong interpersonal skills would seemingly strengthen child welfare staff members' intents to remain employed in child welfare.

In Staffing the Child Welfare Agency: Recruitment and Retention, (Helfgott, 1991), provides comprehensive recommendations for improving the child welfare work

context including: enhancing public relations to counter unfavorable public opinion of public child welfare which has profound and negative effect on child welfare staffs' image of their work. Helfgott recommended enhancing public relations on many fronts from agency brochures, newsletters, speaking engagements with church and community groups, and developing a working relationship with the local media (TV, radio, newspaper). She also recognizes that a stable, committed and competent staff is the best recruitment source. Collaborative efforts with university schools and departments of social work to post job vacancies as well as to provide internship placements, expose students to the field of child welfare. According to Helfgott, successful screening and interviewing are recommended for selecting competent staff. Her recommendations also include orientation and training for new hires, ongoing staff development, and a career path as critical elements for retention of competent staff in child welfare.

Agencies that recognize staff who are effective and work hard via performance-based evaluation and fair compensation for achieving clearly defined responsibilities and expectations, experience low staff turnover (Helfgott, 1991). Salary ranks behind other work factors in decisions to stay or leave (also see Ellett, et al., 1996; Hopkins, et al., 1999; Reagh, 1994). Realistic workloads, improved worker safety, and reducing the threat of legal liability are recommendations to improve retention. Helfgott further discusses the importance competent staff place on recognition or status and prestige of child welfare within the profession of social work and in their communities. Competent supervision, staff participation in management, maintaining a collegial work environment, and resources to meet client needs round out Helfgott's recommendations.

One factor that may well be important in enhancing employee's intentions to remain employed in child welfare (and perhaps in other kinds of organizations as well) is the match between how they view the *actual* work environment and culture and how they would *prefer* these organizational elements to be. Most typically, and as has been recently shown in other professional work settings in schools (Cavanagh, 1997; Olivier, et al. 1998), employees' perceptions of preferred elements of the organizational culture exceed their perceptions of how these elements actually are, almost without exception. Alternatively, employees may be considerably more satisfied with, and less alienated from, the work environment when the discrepancies between how they see elements of the work environment and how they would prefer them to be are minimized. Predictably, and in keeping with the focus of this study, those employees with the highest levels of dissatisfaction and attendant work alienation should demonstrate the lowest levels of intent to remain employed in child welfare. This would seemingly be the case regardless of the absolute levels of actual and preferred perceptions of elements of professional culture.

Research in education as well as Industrial and Organizational Psychology has reported promising research on culture as instrumental in effecting meaningful organizational change (Cavanagh, 1997; Fullan, 1993; Reacher & Schneider, 1990). Personal as well as organizational beliefs, norms and values (culture) have a powerful influence on individual and organizational behavior which makes professional culture a rich independent variable to explore as a correlate of employee retention in public child welfare agencies.

Self-Efficacy

An important theoretical construct that has received a considerable amount of attention in the extant literature of social cognitive psychology (and other literatures as well) during the past 25 years or so, is self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is the other personal variable that was included in this study. The pioneer in theory development and efficacy studies is the social cognitive psychologist, Albert Bandura (1997). Bandura concludes that people are more strongly influenced by their personal beliefs than objective facts, which impacts their level of motivation, feelings, and behavior. People desire and often expend great effort to gain control over their life circumstances. It is their belief that particular actions cause expected results that motivates much of their behavior.

Self evaluations include self-efficacy, which Bandura (1997) defines as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). Efficacy beliefs can influence an individual to become committed to successfully execute the behaviors that are necessary to produce a desired outcome. Bandura makes the argument that persons can exercise considerable influence and control over their own behavior and choices of action. Thus, an individual may believe a particular behavior will produce a given outcome. But if the individual has low efficacy beliefs about capabilities to execute the behavior, the behavior will not occur and the outcome will not be achieved. Similarly, if an individual believes a task can be accomplished, and that the individual possesses the capabilities to accomplish the task (efficacy beliefs), the individual will persevere even in the face of repeated failure.

In discussing the important role that human self-efficacy plays in determining behavior in a wide variety of settings, Bandura (1977) states:

> perceived self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute courses of action to produce given attainments...(and self-efficacy beliefs)...influence the courses of action people choose to pursue, how much effort they put forth in given endeavors, how long they will persist in the face of obstacles and failure, their resilience to adversity, whether their thought patterns are self-hindering or self-aiding, how much stress and depression they experience in coping with taxing environmental demands, and the level of accomplishments they realize (p.3).

Clearly, within the context of the difficulties surrounding work in child welfare, the self-efficacy of professional staff becomes an important concern.

Acquired knowledge and skill are essential in the development of personal beliefs that performing particular actions will lead to expected outcomes. Self-efficacy theory also explains that, without necessary cognitive and behavioral skills (competence, professional knowledge and practice skills in the case of social work), no amount of self-efficacy will lead to task accomplishment (Bandura, 1997). People approach and engage in tasks or activities for which they believe they possess the capability and avoid those for which they do not believe they have the capability to succeed.

Bandura (1997) depicts the theory of self-efficacy as a complex process of self-persuasion which links knowledge acquisition, personal beliefs about capabilities, and subsequent behavior. Efficacy beliefs emanate from four primary sources: a) enactive mastery experiences (success or failure at tasks), b) vicarious learning experiences (watching others who are successful or unsuccessful in performing tasks), c) verbal persuasion (from others or self), and d) physiological/affective states (which may be

pleasant or unpleasant). Thus, the self-efficacy belief system is developed through the dynamic, reciprocal interplay among personal beliefs (possessing cognitive and affective elements) , the environment, and subsequent behavior.

Early studies of self-efficacy held that the construct was situational and task specific and could not be generalized across situations and tasks like self concept, self-esteem, locus of control, and other self systems. More recently, the literature addresses self-efficacy beliefs as part of a system of cognitively structured experiences and reflective thought. This view conceptualizes self-efficacy as consisting of more generalized rather than highly specific beliefs (Bandura, 1997; Bandura, Adams, & Bayer,1977; Johnson, 1999; Zimmerman, 1989). Self-efficacy beliefs are also considered to vary in levels (task difficulty), strength (effort/persistence), and generality (across situations and tasks). Thus, across different domains in which individuals function, there is no exact, predictable relationship between efficacy beliefs, expectations related to performance outcomes (what accrues to the individual), and subsequent behavior.

In Bandura's (1997) view, it is the affective and evaluative states that follow actions performed that represent outcomes that accrue to the individual. These outcomes can be either positive and reinforce and reward the individual, or negative and discourage the individual. It is these outcomes that the individual subsequently strives for, rather than particular behaviors or performance targets. Most outcome research generally measures or evaluates actions, tasks or the product of actions and tasks. The strength of perceived self-efficacy according to Bandura, is important to the individual's level of effort, persistence in overcoming obstacles, resilience to continue when

unsuccessful, and accomplishments. People develop personal standards through which they regulate their own behavior and participate in things from which they derive the greatest satisfaction and sense of self reward and fulfilment.

Bandura (1986) considers "self reflection as the most uniquely human capability" and considers that "through self-referent thought, people evaluate and alter their own thinking and subsequent behavior." Bandura (1978) introduced the concept of reciprocal determinism, that is, the reciprocal interaction of behavioral, cognitive and environmental factors of which self-efficacy is an integral part. In his latest work, (1997) he has changed the terminology to "triadic reciprocal causation," i.e. behavior, personal factors (cognitive, affective and physiological events), and the environment mutually and reciprocally influence each other in human agency.

The personal construct of self-efficacy fits social work's study of the person in the environment and expands it to include reciprocity with behavior. Self-efficacy is not a fixed character or trait, but varies considerably within different areas of functioning and within different contexts. For example, a child welfare employee with the requisite knowledge and skills may have strong beliefs in their capability to accurately assess parenting ability and no self-efficacy to assess a mechanical problem with an automobile. Thus, self-efficacy is generative, dynamic, and context based.

While the construct of self-efficacy is relatively recent (Bandura, 1977), it has been researched in a number of disciplines including psychology, medicine, education, and sports. Collective-efficacy, or a groups' shared beliefs in their capabilities to realize given levels of attainment (Bandura, 1997), has also been given attention in the behavioral psychology literature. Bandura also discusses "prejudicially structured

systems" when self-efficacy beliefs do not hold because the prejudice of the system will impede the desired outcome. Other than in selected therapeutic settings, theories of self-efficacy and related research findings have not yet been widely applied. There are a large number of emerging studies on self-efficacy and behavior in educational settings with both teachers (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998) and students (Pajares, 1996).

Pajares (1996) completed an extensive review of self-efficacy beliefs research findings in academic settings and subsequently Tschannen-Moran, et. al (1998) completed a comprehensive review of findings with teachers. These reviews have considerable relevance for application in social work. According to self-efficacy research findings, individuals approach situations about which they feel competent and confident and avoid those about which they do not. This phenomenon may explain why social work students with child welfare stipends who were able to find employment in child welfare agencies studied by Vinokur-Kaplin (1987 & 1991), reported high levels of satisfaction in their jobs. The stronger an individual's self-efficacy beliefs, the greater their efforts, persistence, and resilience to overcome obstacles and barriers (Bandura, 1997; Pajares, 1996).

The only known study of self-efficacy and employee turnover in social work was completed by Ellett (1995). His study attempted to examine the role of self-efficacy motivation and persistence (a consequence of the strength of self-efficacy beliefs) and their relationships to employee intents to leave employment in child welfare, general work morale, and job satisfaction. Respondents with low self-efficacy scores indicated high intentions to leave employment in child welfare. Other studies of self-efficacy are just beginning to appear in the social work literature. For example,

Pearlmutter (1998) provided a review of self-efficacy in relation to organizational change leadership. Holden, Barker, Meenaghan and Rosenberg (1999) developed a measure of student research self-efficacy in social work education which did not lend itself to this study. The only other study of self-efficacy in social work clearly confused Rotter's internal locus of control (1966) with self-efficacy and was not considered useful to the present study (Kunz & Kalil, 1999).

The utility of self-efficacy to child welfare work environments seems obvious. The motivation of staff to attempt, maintain effort, and complete work tasks would seemingly be important to all employers and organizations. Organizations that reward valued accomplishments strengthen employee self-efficacy for those tasks and actions to achieve organizational goals, particularly if the employee views the efforts as worthwhile.

The extant literature in the psychology of behavior and social learning theory (the basis for developing self-efficacy) suggests this construct has great potential for research in public child welfare. This seems particularly the case since self-efficacy is learned through experience, is situationally and task dependent, and has both motivational (persistence in the face of barriers/obstacles and failure) and expectancy outcome (beliefs about the linkage between one's behavior, accomplishments, and rewards) components. As part of an individual's personal belief system, self- efficacy can also be differentiated from self concept and self esteem (more global notions about personality characteristics as these function across different tasks and settings).

Chapter Summary

The decision employees make to leave or remain in child welfare, is complex and is not yet completely understood. While recommendations abound to remedy turnover and to improve retention in child welfare, little attention has been paid to the importance of personal factors such as human caring and self-efficacy, or to dimensions of professional organizational culture. The review of the literature base reported in this chapter suggests that these factors, which have been explored in nursing, education, and industrial and organizational psychology, also have relevance in child welfare. The chapter that follows provides a description of the methodology for the study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This research study was designed to identify personal and organizational factors associated with intentions to remain employed among child welfare practitioners in Arkansas and Louisiana state public child welfare agencies. The basic design for the study required the use of survey methods and quantitative data analyses. The original design called for administering appropriate study measures to all professional level child welfare staff in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Region VI which encompasses the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. The agency head from each state was contacted and requested participation of their state's professional level child welfare employees. The Arkansas and Louisiana state agencies agreed to participate.

This chapter describes the research design and methodologies used to explore the hypothesized relationships among the study variables. Included is a description of the general research design, the measures used, the data collection procedures, and the data analyses necessary to refine the study measures and to test the predictive hypotheses guiding the study. Procedures used in supplemental analyses of the data are also described.

Participants

The Arkansas Department of Human Services/Division of Children and Family Services and the Louisiana Department of Social Services/Office of Community Services are the state agencies responsible for child protection, services to abusive/neglectful families, foster care, adoption, and the recruitment, training and certification of foster and adoptive families. These states provide a large sample, 44.2%

of all staff, from urban and rural areas which is believed to be similar to that of many other states, thus providing results with some generalizability within child welfare nationwide. Structurally, Louisiana and Arkansas agencies are state funded and administered with a central state office. This structure reflects one of two arrangements most typical of state public child welfare agency structures nationally.

A request to state agency heads in the five states in the DHHS federal region was made via letter with an attached Executive Summary of the study for all professional level staff to participate in late 1999 or early 2000. It became necessary for the researcher to make multiple follow up contacts by phone, faxed letters and email for several months, also providing additional information as requested. The researcher also requested and made a presentation at the Louisiana Regional Administrators' meeting in January, 200 to explain the study and to solicit support for staff in their region to participate when the survey was disseminated. In November, 1999, elections for state governor were held. This extraneous bit of information is relevant because the governors have authority for appointing child welfare agency heads and there was a change of agency heads in each of the five states in Region VI complicating procurement of participation agreements. This delayed decisions from states until February 15, 2000 when the last response was obtained from the last of the five states.

The total survey population for the study from the two participating states was 2,140 professional level child welfare staff (1,359 in Louisiana and 781 in Arkansas). Nine hundred forty six individuals (44.2%) returned surveys prior to data entry and subsequent data analyses. Only five surveys were unuseable and deleted due to excessive missing data.

Instrumentation/Measures

Expert Review and Content Verification of the Measures

In January, 2000 and prior to the Arkansas agreement to participate, ten child welfare professionals in Louisiana, each with a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree and twenty or more years of experience, were selected as child welfare experts to review and evaluate each survey item for face and content validation. Of the ten experts, all had direct service as well as management experience representing all child welfare programs; six held positions in state office, and four held regional management positions in two regions.

The study's conceptual definition for each survey variable was provided followed by items comprising the respective variable measure with instructions to judge whether each item was an indicator of the larger idea by circling "Yes" or "No". For example, the conceptual definition of intent to remain employed in child welfare in this study was then followed by the nine items constituting the measure to which the experts recorded their judgements for each item. The experts were also asked to identify any items which were not clear and were invited to rewrite them for greater clarity. A copy of the CW Survey Expert Study is included in Appendix A. Seven of the ten experts completed and returned the instrument.

On the Intent to Remain measure, only the three items reflecting intent to leave were identified as not fitting the definition of intent to remain employed in child welfare. This finding was expected since the items had been written from the perspective of leaving child welfare rather than remaining employed. Likewise, on the human caring measure, only items written in the negative (later reverse coded) were

identified as items not indicative of the definitions of the caring variables. For the vast majority of items, all experts agreed they were valid indicators of the variable definitions. There were only a few items for which there was a single No, response. However, the other 6 expert reviewers reported these items as a valid indicators of the variable as conceptually defined. There were a few suggested item content revisions which were made if they fit the conceptual definition of the Human Caring variables and/or added clarity to particular items. Thus, only a few minor, editorial changes in the items were made as a result of the expert panel review. The experts' reviews provided initial face and content validity data for the study measures.

Additionally, in January, 2000, the survey was disseminated to fifteen individuals in Louisiana who worked in parish (comparable to counties in the rest of the U.S.) and regional offices. Twelve direct services workers, two supervisors and one regional administrator from six regions in Louisiana were represented in this group. These individuals were asked to complete the entire survey and return the cover memo only reporting the length of time the entire survey required to complete (see Appendix A). These individuals were also asked to identify any instructions and items that were unclear. Of the fifteen staff asked to participate, eleven completed the task. Times ranged from 10 to 30 minutes with an average of 17.5 minutes reported to complete the survey. Three individuals indicated the instructions for the self-efficacy measure were rather long and somewhat difficult to understand. Subsequently, these directions were shortened and rewritten with greater clarity. Only five of 94 total survey items were noted by one individual as needing clarification, while the other ten respondents found them clear. Thus no changes to the survey items were indicated and no further changes

in item statements were made. So that respondents could gauge the length of time expected to complete the survey, the completion time of 15 to 20 minutes typically reported in this pilot activity, was described in the cover memo that accompanied the survey.

Employee Instrument Packet

An employee self-report packet was disseminated to all professional level child welfare staff in Arkansas and Louisiana through their respective state offices. This packet of materials contained a memorandum from the respective agency head, the survey and a self addressed, postage return envelope. In Louisiana, a letter from the researcher with survey instructions was necessary to accommodate the agency head's restrictions on the memorandum from her. The survey was constructed with measures of intent to remain employed in child welfare, human caring, professional organizational culture, and work-related self-efficacy, followed by a page of employee demographic information (e.g., age, degree level, degree area, gender, ethnicity, work location, years of child welfare employment, etc.). The memorandum from the state agency granted permission to complete the survey on agency time, and assured individuals the survey was voluntary, anonymous, and confidential. Each of these measures is included in Appendix B and each is briefly described below.

Intent to Remain Employed - Child Welfare (IRE-CW)

The Intent to Remain Employed - Child Welfare (IRE-CW) measure consisted of 6 original items developed for this study and three items from a prior study of intent to leave employment in child welfare (Ellett, 1995). There was no existing measure to assess child welfare employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare at the

time of this study. The IRE-CW represents an alternative to more traditionally used measures in studies of employee turnover in the helping professions that focus on personal/work environment stress factors that contribute to employee turnover and burnout e.g., Maslach Burnout Inventory developed by Maslach & Jackson, (1986).

The IRE-CW measure used a four-point Likert response format ranging from 1=Strongly Disagree to 4=Strongly Agree applied to a pool of 9 items resulting in a possible score range of 9 to 36. Items numbers 3, 5 and 7 asked respondents about intentions to leave child welfare employment and were reverse coded for subsequent data analyses. The nine items developed to operationalize child welfare employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare (IRE-CW) are included in Appendix B.

Human Caring Inventory-Social Work (HCI-SW)

The Human Caring Inventory-Social Work (HCI-SW) included in Appendix B is an adaptation of the Human Caring Inventory for Nurses (CIN) originally developed by Moffett (1993) for use with nurses employed in hospital settings. This inventory was designed by Moffett to measure the following affective components of the human caring construct (with the number of items comprising each scale): Professional Commitment (9), Moral/ Ethical Consciousness (6), Receptivity (7), and Responsivity (11). Items on the CIN were subsequently modified and adapted for use with social workers (Ellett, 1995) and public school teachers (Ellett, et al., 2000). The form of the human caring measure used in this study was a further adaptation using factor analysis results from prior studies and reexamination of item content for fit with the current study relative to the total length of the entire survey packet. Items reflecting a professional commitment dimension of human caring were not included in the development of the HCI-SW

measure to avoid a possible tautology with items used on the measure of professional organizational culture. The CIN developed by Moffett, also included items to measure the tendency to control for the social desirability of responses (Crowne & Marlowe, 1964) as reflected in prior studies with this human caring measure. Thus the HCI-SW adapted for this study was designed to measure three affective components of caring as follows (with the number of items comprising each scale): Moral/ Ethical Consciousness (5), Receptivity (5), and Responsivity (5). Four social desirability items (4) were also included on this measure.

Beyond reducing the number HCI-SW items from 38 to 19, a number of additional content modifications were made in the HCI-SW from the one Ellett employed in 1995 as follows: in item 3, from "...they deserve" to "...they need"; item 8, from "Social workers should protect the rights of those who don't speak for themselves." to "I advocate for clients who can't or don't speak for themselves."; item 13 from "...in trouble, I try not to become involved." to "...having troubles, I am sensitive to their feelings and needs."; item 17 was changed from "...clients to know that the social worker cares..." to "...clients and staff for whom I am responsible to know that I personally care..."; and items 4, 14, 16 and 18 were new additions. The final form of the HCI-SW consisted of 19 items which were rated using a four-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree and 4=Strongly Agree). The possible score range for the total HCI-SW measure was 19 to 76. Items numbers 7, 9 and 14 were phrased in the negative and were reverse coded for subsequent data analyses. Items for the HCI-SW and items comprising the Social Desirability Index are shown in Appendix B.

Self-Efficacy Assessment-Social Work (SEA-SW)

This measure operationalized the theoretical construct of self-efficacy reflected in social cognitive theory and as described by Bandura (1997). A pool of 20 efficacy work task items were developed. The Self-Efficacy Assessment-Social Work (SEA-SW) asks respondents to make a judgement about the strength of their personal beliefs in their capabilities to organize and carry out tasks to successfully accomplish outcomes in child welfare in view of factors in their work context. Seventeen of the twenty items generated for the SEA-SW are child welfare work task statements and three items, #'s 2, 5, and 12 are statements of motivation and persistence to accomplish work tasks (efficacy outcomes). The final SEA-SW consisted of 20 items that were responded to using the following stem: The strength of my personal beliefs in my capability to: (item statement). The response scale was a four-point Likert scale ranging from: 1=Weak to 4=Very Strong. The possible score range for the total SEA-SW was 20 to 80. The SEA-SW items and response format are included in Appendix B.

Professional Organizational Culture Questionnaire-Social Work (POCQ-SW)

The POCQ-SW is a version of the Revised School Culture Elements Questionnaire (Bobbett, et al., 1997) that was specifically adapted for child welfare settings in this study. The School Culture Elements Questionnaire (SCEQ) was originally developed for use in schools in Western Australia by Cavanagh (1997). The response format for the original SCEQ consists of a five-point Likert Scale ranging from 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree. Respondents are asked to make two agreement judgements about each SCEQ item: (a) how they *actually* see their school

(work) environment/culture (Actual scale), and (b) how they would *prefer* their school (work) environment/culture to be (Preferred scale). Subsequent to Cavanagh's original work, the SCEQ has undergone two revisions using large samples of teachers (n=3,279 and n= 1,389) in both suburban/rural and urban contexts. The current version of the SCEQ (Ellett, et al. 2000) includes three dimensions (with the number of items comprising each dimension) identified through extensive factor analyses: Vision/ Leadership (28), Collegial Teaching and Learning (15), and Professional Commitment (11).

The Professional Organizational Culture Questionnaire -Social Work (POCQ-SW) is an adaptation of the latest form of the SCEQ created by editing the content and focus of all items to fit the social work context. The 54 items comprising the three factored subscales of the RSCEQ in the latest study (Ellett, et al., 2000) were considered too lengthy when combined with the other measures in this study. Therefore, only 24 items were selected to operationalize three dimensions of organizational culture. These items were selected by considering the strength of item/factor loadings from the Ellett, et al. (2000) study results, and from an expert content review (described above) that considered the face validity of the items within the social work context. In addition, ten new items were developed to more specifically reflect social work and child welfare work settings. Thus, the final version of the POCQ-SW included the following three dimensions and numbers of items: (a) Vision/Leadership (15), (2) Collegial Teaching and Learning (10), and (c) Professional Commitment (9). Each item was responded to using a four-point, forced choice Likert scale ranging from 1=Strongly Disagree to

4=Strongly Agree. Appendix B includes a listing of items developed to operationalize each of the three POCQ-SW subscales.

Data Collection Procedures

Prior to dissemination of the survey, approval was sought and received from a LSU School of Social Work faculty representative to the Institutional Review Board that this study met the conditions of survey research with human subjects (full disclosure, voluntary and confidential) for exemption from institutional oversight. Arrangements were made with the LSU Measurement and Evaluation Center to print electronically scannable survey forms as well as to collate the survey packets. The decision was made to use yellow legal size paper for the survey to prevent it from becoming lost in a sea of white letter size paper with which child welfare staff generally have to contend. The surveys were forwarded to a central collection point in the LSU School of Social Work.

The data for the study were collected by administering a survey packet to all study participants. Individual paper and pencil packets with return postage envelopes were prepared, packaged and sent to each parish/county/district office within each of the participating states. Individual survey packets included: (a) a cover letter describing state agency approval of and purpose of the study, request for participation, and instructions, (b) the study measures, reflected on an electronically scannable response form (bubble sheet), (c) a demographic information form and (d) a self-addressed return postage envelopes. Participants were informed about how/why they were selected for the study and advised that all information would be collected in a manner that would maintain participant anonymity and the confidentiality of responses. Time

lines for completing the instrument packet (two weeks) were detailed, and procedures for mailing the completed response forms to the researcher were described.

To assist in increasing response rates, two follow-up reminders were e-mailed to all professional level child welfare staff granting , two, one-week extensions. Approximately one month from the time the survey response forms were disseminated, they were electronically scanned to a computer-based data file and transferred to a computer disk for subsequent analyses.

Data Analysis Procedures

A variety of quantitative data analyses were completed in the study. These included:

1. summaries of descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) for characteristics by each state and of the total sample (demographic items),
2. descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) for items of the various measures by each state and for the total sample as well as the mean difference between preferred and actual scores on the POCQ-SW measure,
3. factor analyses of all measures to empirically identify measurement dimensions,
4. descriptive statistics (means, standard deviation, and means expressed as percentage of the maximum possible score) for each factored measurement variable,
5. reliability analyses of identified measurement subscales (Cronbach Alphas)
6. bivariate (Pearson product moment) correlations among the measurement subscales (independent variables) and the dependent variable (IRE-CW) to test hypotheses,

7. intercorrelations among the independent variables,
8. stepwise multiple regression analyses regressing the IRE-CW measure on factored subscales of the personal and organizational factors measures to test hypothesized relationships among the dependent and combined independent variables,
9. hierarchical linear regression analyses regressing the IRE-CW measure on a prioritized ordering of the personal and organizational factors measures to explore potential theoretical relationships among the study variables,
10. t test comparisons of Louisiana and Arkansas respondents on each factor for each measure,
11. factorial analyses of variance (ANOVAs) and post hoc multiple comparisons tests using selected demographic variables (e.g. gender, degree type, race, and years of employment) for each of the study measures.

Chapter Summary

This chapter described the design of the study, the two state sampling procedure, the development of the study measures, data collection procedures, and data analyses completed. Chapter four that follows presents descriptive and inferential statistical results of the various data analyses.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This Chapter presents the results of the analyses of data from the multi-state survey of child welfare staff. Included are summaries of descriptive statistics for characteristics of the sample and for items comprising the various measures used. Results are also included for the analyses completed to refine and examine the validity and reliability of the data. Of particular importance are the results summaries for the analyses completed to answer the hypotheses framing the study. Results related to the analyses are presented in tables throughout the chapter. The order of results presented is as follows: (a) characteristics of the sample(s), (b) descriptive statistics for the study measures for the total sample and by respondents in each state, (c) factor analyses of the study measures, (d) descriptive statistics for factored variables; (e) reliabilities of the data for each of the factored measures, (f) intercorrelations among the factored measures, (g) regression analyses of the Intent to Remain measure on the factored measures and their factored subscales, (h) summary of results for each hypothesis and research question framing the study, and (i) findings from supplemental analyses of the data.

Characteristics of the Sample of Survey Respondents

The complete survey packet described in chapter 3 was administered to 2140 child welfare staff in Louisiana and Arkansas during the spring of 2000. Completed surveys were received from 946 participants for 44.2% return rate representing child welfare staff at all levels within their agencies. The percentage return rates were 41.36% for Louisiana to 45.7% for Arkansas. Inspection of the raw data file identified five cases

that were deleted because of extreme amounts of missing data. The final data file with useable responses available for analysis was 941 cases. Descriptive statistics (sample sizes, frequencies, means and standard deviations) were computed on all categories of variables for the demographic information form and for each survey measure item.

Table 1 presents a summary of the number and frequency of responses for each of the demographic variables on the demographic form of the survey for the total sample as well as for each state. Percentages in the table do not always total 100% due to missing data. Additionally, frequencies and percentages shown for some categories may be somewhat inaccurate because of response errors. For example, some respondents failed to report education level or degrees. Others checked more than one degree or major, etc.

As shown in Table 1, of the total respondents, 83% were female and 16.7% male with 58.2% of all participants over age 40. By ethnicity, percentages of responses were as follows: 65.3% white 31.9% African American, and 2.8% other. Percentages of responses by age were 16.7% 30 years or younger, 25.0% between 31 and 40, and 58.2% older than 40 years of age. The major difference between states in the age category, was that 42.6% of Arkansas respondents were 35 years of age and younger, while 44.2% of those responding in Louisiana were between the ages of 46 and 56. Respondents' educational levels included 3% with less than a college degree, the vast majority, 68.8%, with a baccalaureate degree, and 27.7% with a masters degree. Interestingly, when comparing results for the two states, a considerably larger percentage of staff had masters degrees in Louisiana (40.0%) than in Arkansas (8.7%). Also to be

Table 1

Summary Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Characteristics of Total Sample (n=941)

Characteristics	Louisiana n=562	61.2%	Arkansas n=357	38.8%	Total n=941	100%
Office Level						
State	44	8.2	42	12.5	89	9.9
Area/Region	133	24.7	34	10.1	169	18.9
County/Parish	361	67.1	261	77.4	638	71.2
Gender						
Male	89	16.6	56	16.7	149	16.7
Female	446	83.4	280	83.3	743	83.0
Age						
20 - 25	14	2.6	36	10.8	53	6.0
26 - 30	41	7.7	52	15.6	95	10.7
31 - 35	56	10.5	54	16.2	111	12.5
36 - 40	60	11.3	47	14.1	111	12.5
41 - 45	82	15.4	49	14.7	134	15.1
46 - 50	135	25.4	43	12.9	183	20.7
51 - 55	100	18.8	30	9.0	132	14.9
56 - 60	33	6.2	17	5.1	51	5.8
60 +	10	1.9	6	1.8	16	1.8
Ethnicity						
African American	151	27.7	131	38.4	289	31.9
Asian/Pacific Islander	1	0.2	2	0.6	3	0.3
Caucasian	382	70.0	199	58.4	592	65.3
Hispanic/Latino	8	1.5	1	0.3	9	1.0
Native American	2	0.4	3	0.9	5	0.6
Other	2	0.4	5	1.5	8	0.9
Education/Degree Level						
Less than BA/BS	2	0.4	25	8.1	27	3.0
BA/BS	279	59.5	257	83.2	548	68.8
Masters	187	40.0	27	8.7	221	27.7
Doctorate	1	0.1	0	0.0	1	0.1

Table 1 (Cont.)

Characteristics	Louisiana n=562	61.2%	Arkansas n=357	38.8%	Total n=941	100%
Degree Level & Type						
BA/BS						
Social Work	105	29.2	86	29.9	197	29.8
Psychology	37	10.3	50	17.4	89	13.5
Sociology	48	13.3	52	18.1	102	15.4
All Others	170	47.1	100	34.7	273	41.3
Master's						
Social Work	192	75.9	14	29.8	209	67.9
All Others	61	24.1	33	70.2	98	31.8
Current Position						
Caseworker	336	64.6	233	71.5	584	67.5
Supervisor	100	19.2	71	21.8	174	20.1
Area/Reg. Supervisor	37	7.1	7	2.1	44	5.1
Area/Reg. Administrator	18	3.5	6	1.8	24	2.8
St. Office Mngr/Spec.	20	3.8	8	2.5	29	3.4
St. Office Adm.	9	1.7	1	0.3	10	1.2
Current Work Assignment						
Child Protection	92	18.4	39	15.5	132	17.3
In-Home Fam. Services	36	7.2	15	6.0	53	6.9
IHBS/Fam. Preservation			5	2.0	5	0.7
Foster Care/Perm. Planning	202	40.5	26	10.3	231	30.2
Adoptions	28	5.6	12	4.8	42	5.5
Home Development	23	4.6	1	0.4	24	3.1
Multiple Programs	83	16.6	129	51.2	214	28.0
Other	35	7.0	25	9.9	60	7.9
Length of CW Employment						
0 - 3 years	100	18.9	149	45.8	237	27.0
4 - 9 years	124	23.3	100	30.7	215	24.6
10 - 19 years	138	25.8	53	16.1	197	22.6
20 + years	169	34.0	22	6.6	194	22.3

Note: Percentages that do not total 100% are due to missing data.

noted in the table is the finding that 8.1% of respondents in Arkansas reported less than a bachelor degree compared to 0.4% in Louisiana. The Bachelor of Social Work represented the most often reported undergraduate degree type (29.8%), with sociology second (15.4%), then psychology (13.5%). The remaining 41.3% had other undergraduates degrees, and 67.9% of those who reported a master's degree held MSWs.

For the total sample, percentages of staff by position were as follows: 67.5% were in worker positions, 20.1% were first line supervisors, 5.1% were regional or area supervisors, 2.8% were regional or area administrators, 3.4% were in state office manager or specialist jobs, and 1.2% were state office administrators. There were some state differences of interest. For example, 64.6% of Louisiana respondents held worker positions, while 71.5% held similar positions in Arkansas. In Louisiana, 7.1% of respondents were regional supervisors, whereas there were 2.1% area supervisors in Arkansas. In Louisiana, 3.5% of respondents were regional administrators compared to 1.8% area administrators in Arkansas. Work assignments for the total sample included 30.2% in foster care, 28.0% in multiple programs, 17.3 in child protection, 7.9% in other programs including Quality Assurance, 6.9% in In-Home Family Services, 5.5% in Adoptions, 3.1% in Home Development and 0.7% in Intensive Home Based Services. Again, there were some state differences in work assignments. In Arkansas, 51.2% of respondents had multiple program work assignments compared to 16.6% in Louisiana. In Louisiana, 40.5% worked in foster care compared to only 10.3% in Arkansas, and 4.6% of Louisiana staff report jobs in home development contrasted with only 0.4% in Arkansas.

Length of employment for the total sample was as follows: 1 - 3 years = 27.0% , 4 - 9 years = 24.6%, 10 - 19 years = 22.6 and 20 + years = 22.3%. Perhaps the most noticeable difference when comparing findings for the two states was that 45.8% of Arkansas respondents had 3 years or less child welfare experience compared to 18.9% of Louisiana respondents. Conversely, 34% of Louisiana respondents had 20 or more years experience in child welfare contrasted to 6.6% of those in Arkansas.

Table 2 includes a summary of item means and standard deviations for each measure used in the study for each state and for the total sample. Item numbers for the various measures can be cross-referenced with the item statements included in Appendix B. As identified in the table, item numbers 3, 5, and 7 on the Intent to Remain Employed measure, as well as items 7, 9, and 14 on the Human Caring Inventory were reverse coded. Items for the first two measures (Intent to Remain Employed and Human Caring Inventory) shown in Table 2 were rated using a four-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree to 4=Strongly Agree). The Self-Efficacy Beliefs items were rated with a four-point scale ranging from 1=Weak to 4=Very Strong.

For the total sample, and the Intent to Remain Employed measure, the highest mean was 3.10 for item # 5 (not actively seeking other employment), and the lowest mean was 2.30 for item # 2 (remain even if offered position outside child welfare with higher salary). For the total sample on the Human Caring Inventory, the highest mean was 3.68 for item # 11 (treating clients with dignity and respect) and the lowest mean, excluding social desirability items, was 2.81 for item # 9 (become involved in clients' problems). For the total sample on the Self-Efficacy measure, the highest mean was 3.31

Table 2

Summary of Item Means and Standard Deviations for the Intent to Remain Employed, Human Caring and Self-efficacy Measures by Each State and the Total Sample

Measure	Louisiana		Arkansas		Total	
	M (n = 562)	SD	M (n = 357)	SD	M (n = 941)	SD
Intent to Remain Employed						
1.	3.21	0.80	2.84	0.87	3.06	0.85
2.	2.36	0.90	2.20	0.89	2.30	0.91
3.*	2.56	0.95	2.41	1.00	2.50	0.97
4.	2.57	0.79	2.47	0.80	2.53	0.80
5.*	3.22	0.81	2.94	0.88	3.10	0.85
6.	2.64	0.74	2.71	0.78	2.67	0.76
7.*	2.86	0.90	2.63	0.92	2.77	0.92
8.	3.05	0.72	2.97	0.69	3.02	0.71
9.	2.57	0.74	2.65	0.74	2.61	0.74
Human Caring Inventory						
1.	2.96	0.52	2.96	0.58	2.96	0.54
2.	2.97	0.60	3.00	0.53	2.98	0.57
3.	3.31	0.57	3.34	0.56	3.32	0.56
4.	3.24	0.52	3.22	0.62	3.24	0.56
5.**	1.84	0.78	1.85	0.81	1.85	0.80
6.	3.08	0.53	3.08	0.59	3.08	0.55
7.*	2.91	0.73	2.89	0.74	2.90	0.74
8.	3.26	0.52	3.26	0.53	3.26	0.53
9.*	2.84	0.67	2.78	0.69	2.81	0.68
10.**	1.74	0.72	1.67	0.66	1.72	0.71
11.	3.70	0.52	3.66	0.51	3.68	0.52
12.	3.44	0.56	3.44	0.54	3.44	0.56
13.	3.36	0.52	3.36	0.51	3.36	0.51
14.*	2.96	0.60	2.74	0.69	2.87	0.65
15.**	2.31	0.71	2.14	0.75	2.24	0.73
16.	3.49	0.55	3.39	0.58	3.45	0.56
17.	3.20	0.64	3.23	0.55	3.21	0.61
18.	3.25	0.49	3.22	0.53	3.24	0.50
19.**	2.30	0.63	2.27	0.63	2.29	0.63

Table 2 (Cont.)

Measure	Louisiana M (n = 562)	SD	Arkansas M (n = 357)	SD	Total M (n = 941)	SD
Self-Efficacy						
1.	3.26	0.63	3.22	0.68	3.24	0.65
2.	3.32	0.64	3.31	0.62	3.31	0.64
3.	3.14	0.70	3.11	0.69	3.13	0.70
4.	3.01	0.72	3.06	0.66	3.03	0.70
5.	2.99	0.75	3.04	0.72	3.01	0.74
6.	2.88	0.83	3.03	0.71	2.94	0.79
7.	2.77	0.94	2.77	0.81	2.77	0.89
8.	2.93	0.79	2.86	0.77	2.90	0.79
9.	2.97	0.84	2.96	0.84	2.97	0.84
10.	3.25	0.70	3.15	0.71	3.21	0.71
11.	3.11	0.64	3.15	0.65	3.13	0.65
12.	2.99	0.69	3.04	0.67	3.01	0.68
13.	2.78	0.79	2.93	0.76	2.84	0.78
14.	3.07	0.65	3.02	0.66	3.05	0.66
15.	3.24	0.68	3.15	0.69	3.21	0.68
16.	2.63	0.84	2.67	0.81	2.65	0.83
17.	2.76	0.83	2.72	0.83	2.75	0.83
18.	2.95	0.73	2.91	0.74	2.93	0.73
19.	3.27	0.66	3.22	0.66	3.24	0.67
20.	3.24	0.68	3.12	0.70	3.19	0.70

Note. * Reverse coded. ** Social Desirability items.

for item # 2 (expend energy and effort to accomplish task) and the lowest mean was 2.65 for item # 16 (influence own career opportunities). Differences between item means and standard deviations when comparing Louisiana and Arkansas respondents were rather negligible, with the exception perhaps of item # 1 on the Intent to Remain Employed measure (I intend to remain in child welfare as my long-term professional career). The

mean difference between the two states for this item was .37, with stronger agreement among Louisiana respondents (3.21) than among Arkansas respondents (2.84). This difference might be explained by the relatively younger and less experienced work force in Arkansas than in Louisiana.

Table 3 includes a summary of actual and preferred means, standard deviations and mean difference scores (preferred mean minus actual mean) for each item of the organizational culture measure for the total sample. Item numbers can be cross-referenced with the item statements included in Appendix B. Items were rated using a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1=Strongly Disagree to 4=Strongly Agree. For all items the preferred score was greater than the actual score. Additionally, standard deviations for the preferred scores were smaller for every item, indicating greater cohesiveness among respondents in their perceptions of preferred elements of professional organizational culture when compared to actual perceptions.

The highest actual mean was 3.25 for item # 30 (In this office child welfare staff believe working in child welfare is important to children, families and communities served). The lowest actual mean score was 2.19 for item # 16 (In this office child welfare staff cooperatively participate with administrators in developing new programs and policies). For the preferred professional organizational culture scores, the highest mean score was for item # 2 (In this office child welfare staff find that supervisors/ administrators are willing to help child welfare staff when problems arise).

The mean difference scores (preferred mean minus actual mean) shown in Table 3 ranged from .40 for item #30 (In this office child welfare staff believe that child welfare

Table 3

Summary of Item Means, Standard Deviations and Mean Difference (Deprivation) Scores for Each Item of the Professional Organizational Culture Measure (Actual and Preferred Perceptions) for the Total Sample (n = 941)

	Actual		Preferred		
Item Number[a]	M	SD	M	SD	Mean Diff.[b]
1.	2.78	0.72	3.58	0.50	0.80
2.	2.82	0.82	3.67	0.49	0.85
3.	2.54	0.74	3.28	0.53	0.74
4.	2.33	0.85	3.36	0.54	1.03
5.	3.11	0.69	3.58	0.50	0.47
6.	2.78	0.72	3.52	0.52	0.74
7.	2.45	0.78	3.35	0.56	0.90
8.	2.54	0.83	3.54	0.53	1.00
9.	2.47	0.85	3.41	0.53	0.94
10.	2.34	0.87	3.45	0.53	1.11
11.	2.78	0.78	3.44	0.52	0.66
12.	2.73	0.87	3.49	0.53	0.76
13.	2.77	0.85	3.58	0.51	0.81
14.	2.76	0.74	3.49	0.50	0.73
15.	2.55	0.82	3.51	0.53	0.96
16.	2.19	0.82	3.42	0.53	1.23
17.	2.77	0.73	3.52	0.52	0.75
18.	3.03	0.75	3.61	0.51	0.58
19.	2.76	0.74	3.47	0.51	0.71
20.	2.58	0.75	3.48	0.52	0.90
21.	2.53	0.83	3.41	0.53	0.88
22.	2.94	0.71	3.48	0.53	0.54
23.	2.29	0.92	3.55	0.53	1.26
24.	2.92	0.69	3.50	0.51	0.58
25.	3.02	0.74	3.61	0.50	0.59
26.	2.45	0.87	3.53	0.53	1.08
27.	2.94	0.65	3.46	0.50	0.52
28.	2.56	0.80	3.49	0.50	0.93
29.	2.57	0.83	3.54	0.51	0.97
30.	3.25	0.62	3.65	0.48	0.40
31.	2.74	0.74	3.52	0.51	0.78
32.	2.57	0.84	3.54	0.53	0.97
33.	2.84	0.73	3.52	0.52	0.68
34.	2.83	0.69	3.49	0.50	0.66

Note. [a] Item numbers can be cross referenced with the item statements included in Appendix B. [b] Mean difference score computed by subtracting actual mean score from preferred mean score.

is important to the children, families, and communities served), to 1.26 for item # 23 (In this office child welfare staff believe that members of the administration show genuine concern for them as professionals in their work). Relatively large mean difference (cultural deprivation) scores were also evident for item # 16 (In this office child welfare staff participate with administrators in developing new programs and policies) (1.23), item #10 (In this office child welfare staff find that administrators provide visible, ongoing support for innovations and ideas) (1.11), item # 26 (In this office child welfare staff find that administrators are empathetic with work-related problems and difficulties) (1.08), item # 4 (In this office child welfare staff view leadership roles as shared by staff and administrators) (1.03) and item # 8 (In this office child welfare staff treat their colleagues as professionals when there are differences of opinion) (1.00). For each of these items, the mean difference (cultural deprivation) score was greater than one full scale point (1.00).

Table 4 reports the means and standard deviations for actual and preferred perceptions for each item of the measure of professional organizational culture for each state. Also included for each item is the mean difference (cultural deprivation) score. For all items and for each state, preferred mean scores exceeded actual mean scores. Perhaps the most striking finding shown in the table is that the cultural deprivation (mean difference) scores were greater for 29 of 34 items for Louisiana respondents than for Arkansas respondents. For the Actual mean scores, 32 of 34 item means were higher for Arkansas respondents than for Louisiana respondents. For the Louisiana sample, 10 actual perceptions mean scores were at or below 2.50. A similar analysis shows only

Table 4

Summary of Item Means, Standard Deviations and Mean Difference (Deprivation) Scores for Each Item of the Professional Organizational Culture Measure (Actual and Preferred Perceptions) for Louisiana (n = 562) and Arkansas (n = 357).

	Louisiana					Arkansas				
	Actual		Preferred			Actual		Preferred		
Item Number[a]	M	SD	M	SD	MD[b]	M	SD	M	SD	MD
1.	2.73	0.71	3.58	0.51	0.85	2.86	0.72	3.58	0.50	0.72
2.	2.80	0.79	3.69	0.48	0.88	2.86	0.85	3.64	0.50	0.78
3.	2.48	0.70	3.30	0.51	0.82	2.64	0.77	3.26	0.55	0.62
4.	2.22	0.83	3.36	0.55	1.14	2.52	0.84	3.35	0.52	0.83
5.	3.09	0.65	3.56	0.51	0.45	3.16	0.74	3.62	0.49	0.46
6.	2.74	0.69	3.52	0.52	0.78	2.84	0.75	3.53	0.50	0.69
7.	2.36	0.75	3.35	0.55	0.99	2.60	0.80	3.36	0.57	0.76
8.	2.50	0.81	3.55	0.53	1.05	2.60	0.87	3.52	0.52	0.92
9.	2.43	0.83	3.41	0.55	0.98	2.54	0.89	3.40	0.49	0.86
10.	2.27	0.85	3.46	0.52	1.19	2.47	0.89	3.43	0.53	0.96
11.	2.72	0.76	3.43	0.52	0.71	2.86	0.82	3.47	0.51	0.61
12.	2.81	0.82	3.49	0.54	0.68	2.60	0.92	3.50	0.51	0.90
13.	2.71	0.81	3.58	0.50	0.87	2.89	0.90	3.59	0.51	0.70
14.	2.73	0.70	3.48	0.50	0.75	2.81	0.79	3.50	0.50	0.69
15.	2.51	0.81	3.52	0.52	1.01	2.64	0.83	3.51	0.54	0.90
16.	2.19	0.81	3.45	0.51	1.26	2.22	0.84	3.37	0.55	1.15
17.	2.71	0.71	3.51	0.53	0.80	2.85	0.76	3.53	0.49	0.68
18.	2.99	0.73	3.59	0.52	0.60	3.10	0.77	3.63	0.48	0.53
19.	2.72	0.71	3.47	0.51	0.75	2.83	0.77	3.48	0.49	0.65
20.	2.53	0.72	3.47	0.52	0.94	2.68	0.79	3.49	0.51	0.81
21.	2.48	0.84	3.41	0.52	0.93	2.60	0.81	3.41	0.52	0.81
22.	2.90	0.67	3.46	0.52	0.56	3.01	0.75	3.52	0.51	0.51
23.	2.25	0.90	3.58	0.51	1.33	2.37	0.96	3.51	0.55	1.14
24.	2.87	0.66	3.49	0.50	0.62	3.01	0.71	3.52	0.49	0.51
25.	3.00	0.71	3.59	0.51	0.59	3.06	0.79	3.65	0.49	0.59
26.	2.40	0.86	3.56	0.52	1.16	2.53	0.88	3.49	0.55	0.96
27.	2.95	0.59	3.46	0.49	0.51	2.95	0.71	3.46	0.52	0.51
28.	2.50	0.77	3.50	0.50	1.00	2.67	0.84	3.49	0.49	0.82
29.	2.56	0.81	3.55	0.50	0.99	2.58	0.86	3.53	0.52	0.95
30.	3.25	0.59	3.66	0.47	0.41	3.27	0.65	3.63	0.47	0.36
31.	2.67	0.69	3.51	0.51	0.84	2.84	0.78	3.54	0.50	0.70
32.	2.55	0.79	3.53	0.52	0.97	2.62	0.90	3.55	0.52	0.93
33.	2.80	0.73	3.51	0.52	0.71	2.92	0.73	3.53	0.50	0.61
34.	2.82	0.64	3.47	0.50	0.65	2.87	0.77	3.52	0.49	0.65

Note. [a] Item numbers can be cross referenced with the item statements included in Appendix B. [b]Mean difference score computed by subtracting actual mean score from preferred mean score.

four actual mean scores lower than 2.50 for the Arkansas sample. For both samples, the lowest actual perception mean score was for item # 16 (In this office child welfare staff cooperatively participate with administrators in developing new agency programs and policies) (Louisiana mean = 2.19, Arkansas mean = 2.22). When comparing results for the two states, differences between preferred mean scores were rather negligible.

Factor Analyses of the Study Measures

Data for each of the measures used in the study were analyzed in a series of factor analysis procedures to identify the nature of latent constructs measured. Since each of the measures was either originally designed for the study or adapted from measures used in non-social work contexts, a series of exploratory factor analyses was completed for the total sample of respondents (n=941), using principal components procedures and orthogonal and oblique rotations of factors depending upon the particular measure. For each measure, unconstrained solutions to extract as many factors as possible (using the default option of only retaining factors that explained at least 1.00% of the total item variance) were followed by iteratively extracting and rotating from one to multiple factors. Factor loadings, scree plots, and variance explained by factors identified in the various solutions were used to arrive at final factor structures for each measure. The goal in each analysis was to arrive at solutions containing the fewest meaningful factors relative to the total variance explained by the particular solution. Negatively stated items were recoded as needed for ease of factor interpretation.

The following general decision rules were used to retain items on particular factors:

1. The minimum item/factor loading to consider retaining an item on a factor was .33.
2. Items loading at least .33 on more than one factor were retained on the factor with the highest loading.
3. If an item loaded at or above .33 on more than one factor, the item was retained on the factor with the highest loading, only if the difference between the two highest squared loadings (coefficients of determination) were at least .10 (ten percent greater item/factor communality for the highest loading item than for the next highest loading item).

Intent to Remain Employed-Child Welfare (IRE-CW) Measure

Table 5 presents a summary of item communalities and factor loadings for a retained one-factor, principal components solution for the Intent to Remain Employed measure. Factor loadings are item/factor correlations. Communalities are sums of all squared item/factor loadings for each item. The eigen value shown is the sum of all item communalities for a factor. The total variance explained is the eigen value divided by the total number of items comprising the measure. All nine of the measurement items were retained in this one-factor solution. The factor loadings ranged from .54 (Item #9) to .76 (Item #'s 1 and 5). Loadings for six of the nine items approached or exceeded .70. This one-factor solution accounted for 48.46% of the total item variance. No other factor was identified in a subsequent multiple (two) factor solution. The Intent to Remain

measure was used in all subsequent analyses as a uni-dimensional measure of employee's intentions to remain employed in CW. The factor acronym developed for this variable was IRE (Intent to Remain Employed).

Table 5

Summary of Item Communalities and Factor Loadings for a One-Factor Solution for the Intent to Remain Employed Measure (n=941)

Item Number[a]	Communality	Item/Factor Loading[b]
1.	.58	**.76**
2.	.50	**.71**
3.	.48	**.69**
4.	.44	**.66**
5.	.58	**.76**
6.	.37	**.61**
7.	.55	**.74**
8.	.56	**.75**
9.	.29	**.54**
Eigen Value	4.36	
% of Variance Explained	48.46	

Note. [a] Item Numbers can be cross-referenced with item statements included in Appendix B. [b] Item/Factor loadings are correlations.

Human Caring Inventory-Social Work (HCI-SW) Measure

Data for the total sample of respondents for the Human Caring Inventory (HCI-SW) were subjected to a series of principal components analyses using oblique rotation of factors as described above. Oblique rotation was used because of the a priori theoretical assumption of moderate intercorrelations among any identifiable sub-constructs in a theory of the affective elements of human caring. An initial,

unconstrained solution identified four salient factors accounting for 48.6% of the total variance in the data. These results initiated concern for the small number of items (2-3) defining each factor and the interpretability of the items defining factors. Four of 15 HCI-SW items failed to load on a factor in this solution. Subsequently, one, two and three-factor solutions were completed. The two factor solution identified a strong first factor defined by 12 items that accounted for 25.33% of the variance in the data, and a much weaker second factor (3 items) that accounted for 12.07% of the total item variance. The total variance explained in the two-factor solution was (34.18%).

In examining results for all solutions and with concern for parsimony of interpretation of results, the decision was made to accept a one-factor solution for the Human Caring Inventory-Social Work data. Table 6 presents a summary of communalities and item/factor loadings (correlations) for the one-factor solution for the HCI-SW data. Thirteen of 15 HCI-SW items were retained in this solution, with only item # 7 (.27) and item # 14 (.27) failing to load beyond the .33 minimum criterion established for the retention of items on factors. For the 13 items retained, item/factor loadings ranged from .37 (item # 9) to .68 (item # 13). The one-factor solution accounted for 25.97% of the total item variance. Nine of the 13 item/factor loadings exceeded .50. The single human caring factor was labeled HCI and was used in subsequent analyses of the data. The conceptual definition and items that operationalize this human caring measure resulting from the factor analyses completed in this study are included in Appendix C.

Table 6

Summary of Item Communalities and Factor Loadings for a One-Factor Solution for the Human Caring Inventory (n = 941).

Item Number[a]	Communality	Item/Factor Loading[b]
1.	.17	**.41**
2.	.25	**.50**
3.	.26	**.51**
4.	.29	**.54**
6.	.21	**.46**
7.	.07	.27
8.	.38	**.62**
9.	.14	**.37**
11.	.30	**.55**
12.	.37	**.61**
13.	.46	**.68**
14.	.07	.27
16.	.20	**.45**
17.	.35	**.59**
18.	.35	**.59**
Eigen Value	3.9	
% of Variance Explained	25.97	

Note. [a] Item Numbers can be cross-referenced with item statements included in Appendix B. [b] Item/Factor loadings are correlations.
Items 5, 10, 15, and 19 were excluded as social desirability items

Professional Organizational Culture Questionnaire-Social Work (POCQ-SW) Measure

Data for the Professional Organizational Culture measure were factor analyzed using a series of principal components analyses with orthogonal rotation of factors. Orthogonal rotations were used because of the assumption that dimensions of

organizational culture can be considered conceptually independent. An initial unconstrained solution identified four salient factors that retained 26 of 34 items accounting for 55.63% of the total variance in the solution. Subsequently, from one to three factors were extracted and associated results were examined for the number of factors, patterning of loadings, and variance explained by each factor. The final solution considered most representative of the data and that best operationalized organizational culture constructs was a three-factor solution.

Table 7 shows item communalities and factor structure coefficients (item/factor correlations) for the three-factor solution with orthogonal rotation of factors. This three-factor solution accounted for a total of 52.51% of the total item variance. Items retained on factors are shown in bold type. Factor one was defined by 11 items that loaded from .52 (item # 12) to .79 (item # 10). The first factor accounted for a total of 20.32% of the total item variance and was considered a measure of employee's perceptions of Administrative Support (ADMS) in the work setting. The second factor was defined by 7 items with loadings ranging from .56 (item # 24) to .75 (item # 27). This factor accounted for 17.42% of the total variation in the solution and was termed Professional Sharing and Support (PSS). A third factor was extracted that retained 8 items with loadings ranging from .50 (item # 14) to .65 (item #5) accounted for 14.76% of the total variance in the solution. This factor was termed Vision/Professionalism/ Commitment (VPC). The conceptual definitions and items that operationalize the three dimensions of professional organizational measure resulting from the factor analyses completed in this study are included in Appendix C.

Table 7

Summary of Item Communalities and Factor Loadings for a Three-Factor Solution for the Measure of Professional Organizational Culture (n = 941).

Item #[a]	Communalities	Item/Factor Loadings[b] Factor I	Factor II	Factor III
1.	.30	.26	.20	**.51**[c]
2.	.52	**.62**	.25	.27
3.	.41	.30	.20	**.53**
4.	.53	**.59**	.15	.40
5.	.42	.13	.29	**.65**
6.	.38	.20	.14	**.62**
7.	.40	.25	.09	**.63**
8.	.46	.34	.42	.41
9.	.58	**.69**	.20	.26
10.	.73	**.79**	.13	.30
11.	.47	.40	.48	.28
12.	.44	**.52**	.38	.15
13.	.61	**.68**	.31	.22
14.	.49	.37	.32	**.50**
15.	.51	.50	.49	.13
16.	.42	**.57**	.17	.25
17.	.46	.22	.28	**.58**
18.	.44	.16	.31	**.56**
19.	.55	.22	**.60**	.38
20.	.53	.32	.46	.46
21.	.52	**.67**	.17	.21
22.	.52	.20	**.63**	.29
23.	.69	**.78**	.21	.19
24.	.52	.29	**.56**	.35
25.	.58	.22	**.73**	.20
26.	.63	**.76**	.22	.12
27.	.59	.16	**.75**	.18
28.	.53	.48	.55	.23
29.	.54	**.69**	.25	.19
30.	.48	.02	.53	.45
31.	.34	.27	.43	.52
32.	.33	.29	**.57**	.21
33.	.50	.27	.46	.47
34.	.63	.27	**.72**	.19
Eigen Values	17.85	6.91	5.92	5.02
% Variance Explained	52.51	20.32	17.42	14.76

Note. [a] Item Numbers can be cross-referenced with item statements included in Appendix B. [b] Item/Factor loadings are correlations. [c] Bolded numbers indicate final item/factor locations.

Self-Efficacy Assessment-Social Work (SEA-SW) Measure

Data for the self-efficacy measure for the total sample were also analyzed using unconstrained and multiple factor solutions. The initial unconstrained solution with orthogonal rotation of factors identified four salient factors that accounted for 54.41% of the total item variance. Subsequently, one, two and three-factor solutions were obtained. Given concerns about scale interpretation, parsimony, total variance explained by a particular solution and the small number of items defining some factors (n=3), the decision was made to retain a two-factor solution for use in subsequent analyses. Table 8 summarizes item/factor loadings (correlations) for the two-factor solution of the self-efficacy measure. The first factor was defined by 11 items and accounted for 24.24% of the variance in the solution. Item/factor loadings for items retained on this factor varied from .50 (item # 7) to .70 (item # 9). This factor was termed Efficacy for Work Tasks (ETSK). Eight items with loadings ranging from .48 (item # 15) to .69 (item # 19) were retained on factor two. This second efficacy factor accounted for 18.83% of the total item variance and was termed Efficacy Motivation (EMOT). Collectively in this analysis, 19 of 20 efficacy items were retained and the two-factor solution accounted for a total of 43.07% of the variance in the data. The conceptual definitions and items that operationalize the two dimensions of the self-efficacy measure resulting from the factor analyses completed in this study are included in Appendix C.

Descriptive Statistics for Factored Dimensions of Measures

Table 9 presents a summary of descriptive statistics for factored subscales of the study measures for respondents in each state (Louisiana, Arkansas) and for the total

Table 8

Summary of Item Communalities and Factor Loadings for a Two-Factor Solution for the Self-Efficacy Beliefs Measure (n = 941).

Item #[a]	Communalities	Items/Factor Loadings[b] Factor I	Factor II
1.	.46	**.65**[c]	.19
2.	.32	.24	**.51**
3.	.47	**.67**	.15
4.	.41	**.55**	.33
5.	.38	.31	**.53**
6.	.41	**.57**	.30
7.	.37	**.50**	.35
8.	.44	**.64**	.18
9.	.51	**.70**	.14
10.	.29	.41	.35
11.	.48	**.64**	.27
12.	.45	.37	**.56**
13.	.37	**.61**	.33
14.	.43	**.59**	.28
15.	.35	.34	**.48**
16.	.35	.19	**.56**
17.	.38	**.57**	.24
18.	.59	.05	**.77**
19.	.44	.21	**.69**
20.	.52	.32	**.65**
Eigen Values	8.61	4.85	3.77
% Variance Explained	43.07	24.24	18.83

Note. [a] Item Numbers can be cross-referenced with item statements included in B. [b] Item/Factor loadings are correlations. [c] Bolded numbers indicate final item/factor locations.

sample. Included in the table are means, standard deviations, and means express as study measures for respondents in each state (Louisiana, Arkansas) and for the total percentages of the maximum possible score for each measure. The percentage of the maximum possible score was computed for each measure so the results could be more

Table 9

Summary of Descriptive Statistics for Each Study Variable for Each State and for the Total Sample (n = 941)

Variable	Louisiana (n = 562) $\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$ % Max[a]	Arkansas (n = 357) $\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$ % Max	Total (n = 941) $\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$ % Max
IRE (9)[b]	25.05	5.11	69.6	23.82	5.22	66.2	24.55	5.22	68.2
HCI (13)	42.09	3.87	80.9	41.91	3.87	82.2	42.03	3.85	80.1
ADMS (11)	27.11	6.77	61.6	28.18	7.34	64.0	27.50	7.02	62.5
PSS (7)	19.81	3.52	70.7	20.36	4.18	72.7	19.99	3.82	71.4
VPC (8)	21.84	3.61	68.2	22.86	4.32	71.4	22.22	3.95	69.4
ETSK (11)	32.68	5.31	74.3	32.83	5.61	74.6	32.74	5.47	74.4
EMOT (8)	24.63	3.59	77.0	24.45	3.76	76.4	24.55	3.70	76.7

Note. [a]$\bar{x}$ % Max = Subscale mean/the maximum subscale score. [b]Number of items on subscale.

easily interpreted across the various measures since the number of items on each measurement subscale differed from one subscale to the next. Results shown for the professional organizational culture variables (ADMS, PSS, VPC) are for actual perceptions of respondents.

For Louisiana respondents, means as percentages of the maximum possible scores varied from 61.6% (ADMS) (Administrative Support) to 80.9% (Human Caring) (HCI). Similar results were evident for the Arkansas sample (64.0%, ADMS) and 82.2% (HCI) and for the two samples combined. The standard deviations for the Arkansas sample were slightly higher (with the exception of the HCI variable) for all

measures. In comparing the professional organizational culture variable results (ADMS, PSS, VPC) to the personal variables results (HCI, ETSK, EMOT) for the total sample, the mean scores expressed as percentages of the maximum possible scores were somewhat lower for the organizational culture variables than for the personal characteristics variables.

Table 10 presents a summary of descriptive statistics for both actual and preferred ratings for each factored dimension of the POCQ-SW measure for both actual and preferred ratings for the total sample of respondents and for respondents in each state. As seen in these results, actual organizational culture scores are lower in all cases (total sample and in each state) than preferred scores for all three POCQ-SW dimensions. Differences between percentages of the maximum possible score (preferred minus actual) for the total sample were; ADMS (24.7), PSS (16.2), VPC (17.9). For Louisiana these differences were; ADMS (26.0), PSS (16.7), VPC (19.0). For Arkansas these differences were; ADMS (22.2, PSS (15.5), VPC (16.2). The most noticeable differences between the two states in preferred minus actual percentages of the maximum possible scores (cultural deprivation index) were for the ADMS scale (Louisiana = 26.0; Arkansas = 22.2) and the VPC scale (Louisiana = 19.0; Arkansas = 16.2). The larger difference scores (cultural deprivation index) for the ADMS scale than for the PSS and VPC scales are accounted for by the ADMS scale receiving lower actual scores than the PSS and VPC scales. The preferred scores for the three POCQ-SW scales were rather comparable for the two states.

Table 10

Summary of Descriptive Statistics for Factored Dimensions of the Professional Organizational Culture Questionnaire (POCQ - SW) for the Total Sample and by Each State for Actual and Preferred Ratings

	Total Sample (n = 941)					
	Actual			Preferred		
POCQ - SW	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$ % Max[a]	$\bar{x}$	SD	$\bar{x}$ % Max
ADMS (11)	27.50	7.02	62.5	38.40	4.23	87.3
PSS (7)	19.99	3.87	71.4	24.54	2.87	87.6
VPC (8)	22.22	3.95	69.6	27.93	2.99	87.3
	Louisiana (n = 562)					
ADMS (11)	27.10	6.77	61.2	38.53	4.12	87.6
PSS (7)	19.81	3.52	70.7	24.47	2.90	87.4
VPC (8)	21.84	3.61	68.2	27.90	2.96	87.2
	Arkansas (n = 357)					
ADMS (11)	28.18	7.34	64.0	38.20	4.22	86.2
PSS (7)	20.36	4.18	72.7	24.70	2.70	88.2
VPC (8)	22.86	4.32	71.4	28.02	2.92	87.6

Note: [a] $\bar{x}$ % Max. Score completed by dividing POCQ - SW scale mean by maximum possible scale score (# items or scale x 4). [b]Number of items on scale.

Reliability Analysis

Data for each of the factored dimensions of the study measures were examined for internal consistency reliability. Cronbach Alpha reliability procedures were used for each factored measurement dimension using the entire sample of respondents (n=941). A summary of Alpha reliability coefficients for the data for the factored measures for the total sample of respondents (n=941) and for the sample of respondents in each state

(Louisiana n=562, Arkansas n=357) is shown in Table 11. For the total sample, these coefficients varied from a low of .79 (Human Caring Inventory) to .92 (Administrative Support scale of the Professional Organizational Culture measure). Five of the 7 reliability coefficients exceeded .85.

Table 11

Cronbach Alpha Internal Consistency Reliability Coefficients for Final Factored Subscales of the Study Measures.

Measures	Alpha Coefficient Total Sample (n = 941)	Louisiana (n = 562)	Arkansas (n = 357)
Intent to Remain Employed (9)[a]	.86	.86	.86
Human Caring Inventory (13)	.79	.80	.79
Professional Organizational Culture			
Administrative Support (11)	.92	.92	.93
Professional Sharing & Support(7)	.88	.86	.89
Vision/Professionalism/Commitment (8)	.83	.80	.86
Self-Efficacy			
Work Tasks (11)	.87	.85	.89
Motivation (8)	.81	.79	.82

Note. [a] Number of items comprising scale.

For Louisiana respondents, the Alpha coefficients varied from .79 (Self-Efficacy Motivation) to .92 (Administrative Support). For the Arkansas sample, reliabilities varied from .79 (Human Caring Inventory) to .93 (Administrative Support). The reliability of the data for the various measures computed for each state and those for the total sample of respondents showed little variation between samples in the two states and when comparing each state sample to the total sample. These results show that the data

collected for items defining the empirically derived (factored) dimensions of the study measures are reasonably homogeneous, free of error, and replicable across work settings in two states..

Bivariate Correlations Among Factored Dimensions of the Study Measures

Pearson product moment correlation coefficients were computed among all factored subscales of the study measures to examine interrelationships among the various subscales, and to test selected hypotheses framing the study. Table 12 shows bivariate correlations between the dependent variable, Intent to Remain Employed (IRE) and the

Table 12

Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlations Between Intent to Remain Employed and Independent Variables in the Study (n = 941)

Variable	Intent to Remain Employed
Human Caring (HCI)	.16
Professional Organizational Culture	
Administrative Support (ADMS)	.34
Professional Sharing &Support (PSS)	.26
Vision/Professionalism/Commitment (VPC)	.26
DEP1	-.21
DEP2	-.13
DEP3	-.08*
Self-Efficacy	
Work Tasks (ETSK)	.17
Motivation (EMOT)	.32

Note. * ($p < .02$). All other correlations are statistically significant at the $p<.0001$ level.

independent variables for the entire sample of respondents. All correlations in the table are statistically significant ($p<.0001$) and in the predicted direction. The correlations

ranged from .34 (Administrative Support with Intent to Remain Employed) to .16 (Human Caring with Intent to Remain Employed). Though statistically significant and in the predicted direction, these correlations are all rather modest in magnitude, with the variance in common ranging from 3% to 12%. Considered collectively, the results in Table 12 show that the Administrative Support dimension of professional organizational culture (r=.34) and the Self- Efficacy Motivation variables (r=.32) have the strongest relationships to employee's intentions to remain employed in child welfare.

Table 13 summarizes Pearson product moment correlations between the study independent variable measures and the Intent to Remain Employed (IRE) Index (dependent variable) for all respondents in each state (Louisiana, Arkansas). Also included in the table are correlations between the IRE and the social desirability index (SD). With three exceptions, the correlations shown in the table were statistically significant beyond the .01 level, with the majority exceeding the .0001 level of statistical significance. In comparing the two states, the most noticeable difference in the magnitude of correlations of the independent variable measures with the IRE was for the ADMS measure (Louisiana r=.38, p<.0001; Arkansas r=.27, p<.001). The remaining coefficients for the two states were all in the same direction and rather similar in magnitude. The two strongest correlates with the IRE for both states were the professional organizational culture administrative support variable (Louisiana ADMS/IRE r=.38, p<.0001; Arkansas ADMS/IRE r=.27, p<.0001) and the self-efficacy beliefs motivation variable (Louisiana EMOT/IRE r=.32, p<.0001; Arkansas EMOT/IRE r=.35, p<.0001). It is also interesting to note that the correlation between the first

Table 13

Intercorrelations Between Factored Dimensions of the Study Measures and Employee's Intent to Remain Employed by Each State

Factored Dimension	Louisiana (n = 562)	Arkansas (n = 357)
HCI	.19	.14
ADMS	.38	.27
PSS	.27	.25
VPC	.26	.26
ETSK	.17	.20
EMOT	.32	.35
DEP1	-.24	-.18
DEP2	-.11	-.15
DEP3	-.06*	-.14
SD[a]	.02*	.04*

Note. [a] SD = Social Desirability.
*p > .05

cultural deprivation variable (DEP1, Administrative Support) and employees' expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare (IRE), though negative and rather moderate in magnitude, was stronger for the Louisiana respondents (r=-.24, p<.001) than for the Arkansas respondents (r=-.18. P<.0001). These coefficients show that the greater the congruence between employees' preferred and actual perceptions of the

frequency and quality of administrative support, the stronger are employees' expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare.

The data were also partitioned by each of three current positions (caseworker/ social worker, supervisor, area/district supervisor) using demographic information from item # 8 on the survey. Subsequently, bivariate correlations were computed between each of the factored subscales of the study measures, the organizational culture deprivation variables (preferred minus actual scores), and the employee intent to remain employed measure using individuals as the units of analysis. The results of these analyses are shown in Table 14. For the caseworker/social worker position, the strongest correlations with the Intent to Remain Employed measure were for Administrative Support (ADMS/IRE, r=.35), Vision/Professionalism/Commitment (VPC/IRE, r=.31), Professional Sharing and Support (PSS/IRE, r=.28), Efficacy Motivation (EMOT/IRE, r=.27), and the first cultural deprivation variable (DEP1/IRE, r=-.26). These correlations were all in the predicted direction, statistically significant beyond the .01 level, and relatively moderate in magnitude.

For the supervisor group, two correlations were statistically significant (ADMS/IRE, r=.26 and EMOT/IRE, r=.30). These were consistent with the direction and magnitude of the correlations for the caseworker/social worker group. None of the correlations for the much smaller group of area/district supervisors was statistically significant. Interestingly, for this group, the cultural deprivation and intent to remain correlations (DEP1/IRE, DEP2/IRE, and DEP3/IRE) were all positive in direction and at odds with the negative correlations for the other two groups. For this respondent group,

the greater the perceived cultural deprivation, the greater the intent to remain employed in child welfare.

Table 14

Intercorrelations Between Factored Dimensions of the Study Measures and Employee's Intent to Remain Employed by Each of Three Current Positions

Factored Dimension	Caseworker/ Social Worker (n = 584)	Supervisor (n = 174)	Area/Reg. Supervisor (n = 44)
HCI	.13*	.06	.17
ADMS	.35*	.26*	.11
PSS	.28*	.15	.16
VPC	.31*	.12	.03
ETSK	.11	.13	.15
EMOT	.27*	.30*	.15
DEP1	-.26*	-.10	.15
DEP2	-.19*	.00	.18
DEP3	-.20*	.06	.22
SD[a]	.00	.03	-.22

Note. [a] SD = Social Desirability.
* $p < .01$.

The correlations between the Intent to Remain Employed (IRE) measure and the social desirability index (SD) showed little relationship between these variables. These findings suggest that responses to the study measures were relatively free of potential social desirability influences. Of interest as well, was the negative relationship between

area/district supervisors' intentions to remain employed and the social desirability scale (r=-.22). The strongest correlations between any of the study variables and the social desirability index for these three groups were -.39 ($p<.01$) for the Human Caring Inventory and .37 ($p<.01$) for the Efficacy Motivation measure for the area supervisor group. The vast majority of correlations between the study measures and the social desirability index was in the range of .00 to -.25, with coefficients lower than .20 most typical (20 of 30 correlations).

Intercorrelations Among the Independent Variables

Table 15 shows Pearson product moment correlations among the factored dimensions of the various measures (independent variables) of the study for the total

Table 15

Summary of Pearson Product Moment Intercorrelations Among All Study Independent Variables for the Total Sample (n = 941)

	HCI	ADMS	PSS	VPC	ETSK	EMOT	SD	DEP1	DEP2	DEP3
HCI	—	.05*	.10	.14	.39	.38	-.22	.17	.17	.17
ADMS		—	.64	.68	.07	.15	-.03	-.84	-.48	-.51
PSS			—	.70	.13	.14	-.04*	-.50	-.75	-.50
VPC				—	.19	.20	-.18	-.51	-.48	-.74
ETSK					—	.69	-.21	.06*	.06*	.00*
EMOT						—	-.22	.03*	.07	.01*
SD							—	-.02*	-.03*	.11
DEP1								—	.66	.69
DEP2									—	..71
DEP3										—

Note. *p .05

study sample (n=941). For the table total of 45 correlations, only 10 (22.2%) failed to reach statistical significance ($p>.05$). The majority of correlations shown were statistically significant beyond the .0001 level. The human caring (HCI) measure was positively and most strongly related to the two self-efficacy variables (HCI/ETSK, $r=.39$, $p<.0001$; HCI/EMOT, $r=.38$, $p<.0001$). The three professional organizational culture measures of actual perceptions of culture were rather strongly and positively related to one another (ADMS/PSS, $r=.64$, $p<.0001$; ADMS/VPC, $r=.68$, $p<.0001$; PSS/VPC, $r=.70$, $p<.0001$). As expected, each of the three professional organizational culture deprivation variables (preferred minus actual scale mean scores) were negatively, and moderately to rather strongly related to perceptions of actual ratings of dimensions of culture. These correlations ranged from $r=-.48$, $p<.0001$ (ADMS/DEP2) to $r=-.84$, $p<.0001$ (ADMS/DEP1). Interestingly, the intercorrelations between the cultural deprivation variables and the self-efficacy measures (ETSK, EMOT) were rather negligible in magnitude ($r=.00$ to $r=.11$) and typically not statistically significant ($p>.05$). As might be expected as well, the three professional organizational culture deprivation variables were positively and rather strongly related (DEP1/DEP2, $r=.66$, $p<.0001$; DEP1/DEP3, $r=.69$ $p<.0001$; DEP2/DEP3, $r=.71$, $p<.0001$).

The results presented in Table 15 also show negative (with one exception) and rather moderate to negligible correlations between the social desirability index (SD) and the independent variables used in the study. These correlations ranged from $r=-.02$, $p>.05$ (SD/DEP1) to $r=-.22$, $p<..0001$ (SD/HCI and SD/EMOT).

Regression Analyses

Stepwise Regressions

A stepwise regression analysis was completed to examine the extent to which combinations of the various independent variables in the study predicted variation among child welfare staff members in their expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare. This regression was completed using the Intent to Remain Employed in Child Welfare (IRE-CW) measure as a dependent variable and regressing the IRE on factored dimensions of the other study measures (independent variable set). In this analysis, the professional organizational culture variables reflected actual perceptions of dimensions of culture, and cultural deprivation variables computed by subtracting respondents' perceptions of actual culture from preferred culture (deprivation score for the ADMS, PSS and VPC factored variables). Table 16 shows the results of this analysis for the

Table 16

Summary of Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis Regressing the Intent to Remain Employed Measure on All Independent Variables in the Study (n = 941)

Step	Variable Entered	R	R^2	ΔR^2	F	p
1.	ADMS	.33	.11	—	118.70	.0001
2.	EMOT	.43	.19	.08	85.19	.0001
3.	DEP3	.44	.19	.00	7.56	.0061
4.	DEP2	.45	.20	.01	6.62	.0102
5.	ETSK	.45	.20	.00	3.94	.0473
6.	VPC	.45	.20	.00	3.90	.0485

total sample of respondents (n=941). Included in the table are the variables entered at each step in the analysis, values for the multiple correlation at each step (R), the squared multiple correlation (R^2), change in the squared multiple correlation at each step (ΔR^2), the F value for the variable entered into the regression equation, and probabilities for each F statistic for the variable entered at each step.

The results in Table 16 show that the ADMS measure was the first variable to enter the regression equation (highest bivariate correlation with the IRE). At step two, the efficacy motivation variable (EMOT) entered the regression equation and increased the multiple correlation to R=.43. Variables entering the regression equation through step number six were statistically significant ($p<.05$) owing to the large sample size. However, these variables predicted very small amounts of the total variation in the Intent to Remain Employed measure. Thus, the results in Table 16 show that for the total sample in the study (n=941), employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare are largely predicted by an organizational culture factor reflecting perceptions of administrative support for employees and a personal factor of self-efficacy motivation. However, these two variables accounted in the prediction equation for only 19 percent of the total variation in the intention to remain employed measure.

Because of concern for employee turnover during the early years of employment, particularly for direct service workers, a second stepwise regression analysis was completed for a sub sample of all caseworker/social workers with three years or less employment in their agency/office (n=337). These results are shown in Table 17. As in the first regression analysis for the total sample, the IRE was regressed on all factored

Table 17

Stepwise Regression of the Intent to Remain Measure on Factored Subscales of the Human Caring, Professional Organizational Culture, and Self-Efficacy Measures for the Total Sample of Caseworkers/Social Workers with 0-3 years of Employment in Child Welfare (n = 337)

Step	Variables Entered	R	R^2	ΔR^2	F	p
1.	VPC	.32	.10	—	26.89	.0001
2.	EMOT	.39	.15	.04	11.86	.0007
3.	ETSK	.41	.17	.02	6.89	.0094
4.	ADMS	.42	.19	.02	3.52	.0619
5.	HCI	.44	.20	.01	3.56	.0605

subscales of the human caring, professional organizational culture and the self-efficacy measures. The three cultural deprivation variables were also included in this analysis. Interestingly, when compared to the first regression analysis, the results of this analysis showed the culture variable of Vision/Professionalism/Commitment (VPC) to be the most important variable in the model (highest bivariate correlation with the IRE measure, step one in the model). This single variable predicted approximately ten percent of the variation in new caseworker employee's intentions to remain employed in child welfare. The variable entering the regression equation at step two was the measure of efficacy-motivation (EMOT). This variable predicted an additional five percent of the IRE variance when combined with the VPC variable. An additional two percent of IRE variance was accounted for by a three variable model that entered the second efficacy measure at step three (ETSK). The three variable model predicted 17% of the total

variance in employees' expressions of intent to remain employed in child welfare. Variables entering the model beyond the third step in the analysis (ADMS and HCI) were not statistically significant (p>05). The results of this analysis show that the best combination of variables predicting relatively new, front line child welfare staffs members' expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare are different from those predicting intentions to remain for the total sample of child welfare professional staff described in the first regression analysis.

Three subsequent regression analyses were completed separately on Louisiana and Arkansas samples of caseworkers/social workers with three years or less work experience. These analyses were completed without the inclusion of the professional organizational culture deprivation variables (DEP1, DEP2, DEP3) to explore the contributions of the three factored dimensions of the measure of actual perceptions of professional organizational culture, the human caring, and the self-efficacy variables to predicting variation in employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare (IRE). The deprivation variables did not enter the regression equation for the total sample of employees with 0 - 3 years of employment (Table 17). The analysis for the Louisiana sample of caseworkers/social workers with three or fewer years experience (n=100) generated a statistically significant (p<.0001), two variable regression model that predicted 20% of the variation in intent to remain employed in child welfare. The two variables entered in this model were Administrative Support (R=.39, F=60.55, p<.0001) and Efficacy Motivation (R=.45, F=20.71, p<.0001). This two variable model predicted

20.3% of the total variation in Louisiana caseworker/social worker (with three years or less experience) expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare.

A similar analysis with the Arkansas sample (n = 237) generated a statistically significant two variable regression model ($p<.0001$) that predicted 18.5% of the variation in employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare. The two variables entered in this model were Efficacy Motivation ($R=35.5$, $F=33.38$, $p<.0001$) and Administrative Support ($R=.43$, $F=16.69$, $p<.0001$). This two variable model predicted 18.5% of the total variation in Arkansas caseworker/social worker (with three years or less experience) expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare.

Hierarchical Regressions

A series of hierarchical regression analyses was completed using the IRE measure as a dependent variable and the HCI, ADMS, PSS, VPC, DEP1, DEP2, DEP3, EMOT and ETSK variables as an independent variable set. In these analyses, the various personal and organizational variables were entered into the regression models in a predetermined order to more carefully examine their direct contributions to employee's intentions to remain employed in child welfare (IRE). These analyses were completed because the stepwise procedures used (above) determine the entry of independent variables into the regression model by purely statistical means, with no a priori theoretical assumptions made about possible ordered influences of the personal and organizational variables on intention to remain employed.

While this study was primarily considered exploratory, there was some evidence from prior research that personal variables made direct contributions to intentions to

remain employed in child welfare over and above those associated with organizational factors. These contributions, while evident in some of the stepwise regression analysis results, were secondary to the statistical contributions of the ADMS professional culture variable, and they appeared to add little to the explained IRE variance. Thus, a hierarchical regression was completed for the total sample of respondents (n=941) by first entering the personal self-efficacy and human caring variables into the regression model, examining their direct influences on the IRE measure, and then entering the organizational culture variables into the model. A second hierarchical regression was completed by first entering the professional organizational culture variables into the model, followed by the three self-efficacy and human caring variables. In these hierarchical regression models, the personal and organizational culture variables were entered into the analysis in an order that reflected the magnitude of their bivariate correlations (highest to lowest) with the IRE measure (see Table 12, page 97).

Table 18 summarizes the results of the first hierarchical regression analysis in which the self-efficacy (EMOT, ETSK) and human Caring (HCI) variables were first entered into the regression model followed by the sequence of professional organizational culture variables (ADMS, PSS, VPC, DEP1, DEP2, DEP3). The first self-efficacy variable entered into the model (EMOT) showed rather strong and statistically significant ($p<.0001$) effects and accounted for approximately 10% of the IRE variance ($R^2 = .10$). The addition of the ETSK and HCI variables to the model, while both were statistically significant ($p<.0001$), only increased the R^2 value to .11. At step 4 in the hierarchical model, the ADMS professional organizational culture variable

Table 18

Hierarchical Regression Analysis Regressing the Intent to Remain Employed Measure on the First Ordered Sequence of the Independent Variables in the Study (Personal Variables followed by Professional Organizational Culture Variables) (n = 941)

Step	Variable Entered	R	R^2	ΔR^2	F	p
1.	EMOT	.32	.10	----	104.82	.0001
2.	ETSK	.33	.11	.01	55.29	.0001
3.	HCI	.33	.11	.00	38.63	.0001
4.	ADMS	.43	.19	.08	53.43	.0001
5.	PSS	.43	.19	.00	43.40	.0001
6.	VPC	.43	.19	.00	36.16	.0001
7.	DEP1	.44	.19	.00	31.16	.0001
8.	DEP2	.44	.19	.00	27.33	.0001
9.	DEP3	.44	.20	.01	25.01	.0001

showed rather strong and statistically significant effects on employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare (IRE) ($F=53.43$, $p<.0001$), and increased the multiple correlation to .186. The addition of the two remaining professional organizational culture variables to the model (PSS, VPC), while statistically significant ($p<.0001$), only increased the R^2 value to .189. The DEP1, DEP2, and DEP3 variables increased the R^2 value to .195. The total variable set, entered in the regression model in this sequence, explained approximately 20% of the total variation in employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare. The efficacy motivation (EMOT) and administrative support (ADMS) showed the strongest direct effects on intentions to remain employed. The efficacy motivation (EMOT) and administrative support (ADMS) variables accounted

for approximately 17.6% of the total variation in employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare. The effects of the remaining variables were somewhat negligible.

In a second hierarchical regression analysis, the three professional organizational culture variables (ADMS, PSS, VPC) and the three culture deprivation variables (DEP1, DEP2, DEP3) were first entered into the model, followed by the two self-efficacy (EMOT, ETSK) and the human caring (HCI) variables. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 19. In viewing the results in Table 19, the ADMS variable entered at step 1 in the hierarchical analysis showed rather strong effects on employees' intentions

Table 19

Hierarchical Regression Analysis Regressing the Intent to Remain Employed Measure on the Second Ordered Sequence of the Independent Variables in the Study (Professional Organizational Culture Variables Followed by Personal Variables) (n=941)

Step	Variable Entered	R	R^2	ΔR^2	F	p
1.	ADMS	.32	.10	----	107.88	.0001
2.	PSS	.33	.11	.01	56.04	.0001
3.	VPC	.33	.11	.00	37.42	.0001
4.	DEP1	.35	.12	.01	32.39	.0001
5.	DEP2	.35	.12	.00	26.04	.0001
6.	DEP3	.35	.12	.00	22.28	.0001
7.	EMOT	.43	.19	.07	30.75	.0001
8.	ETSK	.44	.19	.00	27.69	.0001
9.	HCI	.44	.20	.01	25.01	.0001

to remain employed in child welfare (IRE) ($F=107.88$, $p < .0001$), and accounted for slightly over 10% of the IRE variance. At steps two and three in the model, the PSS and

VPC variables showed statistically significant effects (F=56.04, p<.0001; F=37.42, p<.0001, respectively), but only increased the R^2 value to .11. At steps 4, 5 and 6 in the analysis, the DEP1, DEP2, and DEP3 variables increased the squared multiple correlation to .125. The EMOT variable was entered into the regression model at step 7 which increased the multiple correlation to .187. This variable showed rather strong effects in the model (F=30.75, p<.0001) and served to increase the mount of IRE variance explained by approximately 6.2%. The addition of the ETSK and HCI variables to the regression model at steps 8 and 9 respectively, showed statistically significant effects (p<.0001), but only increased the total IRE variance explained by an additional .008 percent (R^2 =.195). In this analysis, the ADMS and EMOT variables accounted for 16.5% of the total variation in employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare.

In comparing results for the two hierarchical regression analyses, the total amount of variance in employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare was the same (R^2 =.195). The results showed a slightly greater influence of the ADMS variable when entered into the first hierarchical regression (step 4), than the efficacy motivation variable (EMOT) which entered the second model at step 7. The results of these hierarchical regression analyses more clearly demonstrate the direct effects of the employee personal characteristics and organizational culture variables on intentions to remain employed than the results of the stepwise procedures previously reported in Table 16. In comparing results for the stepwise regression analysis (table 16) and the two hierarchical regressions (table 18 and 19) the total amount of variation in employee's

intentions to remain employed in child welfare is approximately the same (20%). Both types of regression analysis clearly identify the administrative support (ADMS) and efficacy motivation (EMOT) variables as the most important in explaining variation in employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare when compared to the other independent variables in the analyses.

Results Pertinent to Each Research Hypothesis

Five research hypotheses were formulated for the study. These hypotheses were stated in predictive form and reflected expected relationships between the various independent variables in the study and the dependent variable (employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare). Each of the study hypotheses is listed below along with appropriate data analysis results that confirm the results pertinent to the confirmation of each hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1

There is a statistically significant ($p<.05$), positive relationship between professional child welfare staff members' self-reported levels of human caring and their expressions of intents to remain employed in public child welfare.

The results of the study provide support for, and confirm the predicted relationship between human caring and intention to remain employed in child welfare. The bivariate correlation between the HCI and the IRE-CW variables for the total sample ($n=941$) was statistically significant, positive in direction, though rather moderate in magnitude ($r=.16$, $p<.0001$).

Hypothesis 2

There is a statistically significant ($p<.05$), positive relationship between child welfare staff members' self-reported self-efficacy levels and their expressions of intents to remain employed in child welfare.

The results of the study provide support for, and confirm the predicted relationship between self-efficacy and intention to remain employed in child welfare. The bivariate correlations between the two empirically derived self-efficacy subscales and the IRE-CW for the total sample were both statistically significant, positive in direction, and rather moderate in magnitude (Self-Efficacy for Work Tasks with IRE-CW, $r=.17$, $p<.0001$; Self-Efficacy Motivation with IRE-CW, $r=.32$, $p<.0001$).

Hypothesis 3

There is a statistically significant ($p<.05$), positive relationship between child welfare staff members' perceptions of professional organizational culture and their expressions of intents to remain employed in child welfare.

The results of the study provide support for, and confirm the predicted relationship between perceptions of professional organizational culture and intention to remain employed in child welfare. The bivariate correlations between empirically derived dimensions of professional organizational culture and intention to remain employed in child welfare for the total sample, were all statistically significant, positive in direction, and moderate in magnitude (Administrative Support with IRE-CW, $r=.34$, $p<.0001$; Professional Sharing & Support with IRE-SW, $r=.26$, $p<.0001$; Vision/Professionalism/ Commitment with IRE-SW, $r=.23$, $p<.0001$).

Hypothesis 4

There is a statistically significant ($p<.05$), negative relationship between child welfare staff members' perceptions of professional organizational culture deprivation and their expressions of intents to remain employed in child welfare.

The results of the study provide support for and confirm the predicted relationship between professional organizational culture deprivation and intention to remain employed in child welfare. The correlations between the three culture deprivation variables and the IRE-SW variable for the total sample were all statistically significant, negative in direction, and moderate to rather weak in magnitude (deprivation in administrative support with IRE-CW, $r= -.21$, $p<.0001$; deprivation in professional sharing and support with IRE-CW, $r= -.13$, $p<.0001$; deprivation in vision/ professionalism/commitment with IRE-CW, $r= -.08$, $p<.05$). Considered collectively, these results provide support for a negative relationship between child welfare employees' perceptions of cultural deprivation and their intentions to remain employed in child welfare.

Hypothesis 5

The combination of child welfare staff personal and professional organizational culture perceptions accounts for more variation in their expressions of intents to remain employed in child welfare than either of these factors considered alone.

The results of the study provide support for and confirm the predicted relationship between intention to remain employed in child welfare and a combination of personal and organizational factors. Results of the stepwise regression analyses

regressing the IRE-CW on the HCI, self-efficacy, and professional organizational culture variables using the total sample of respondents (see Table 16) demonstrated statistical significance ($p<.05$) through six steps in the analysis. The two primary variables accounting for the majority of variation in the intent to remain measure were a combination of one professional organizational culture factor (Administrative Support) and one self-efficacy factor (Efficacy Motivation). Together these two variables accounted for more variation in employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare than either variable considered alone. The remaining four variables in the regression model were a combination of employee personal (self-efficacy for work tasks) and organizational factors (cultural deprivation and vision/professionalism/commitment). While statistically significant ($p<.05$) at each step in the regression analysis, these latter variables only predicted small amounts of variation in employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare beyond that predicted by the self-efficacy motivation and administrative support variables.

In a second stepwise regression analysis for all caseworkers/social workers with three years or less work experience, a three variable model consisting of the professional organizational culture measure of Vision/Professionalism/Commitment and the two self-efficacy beliefs measures (efficacy motivation and efficacy beliefs about work tasks) predicted 17% of the total variation in employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare. These results provide additional confirmation for the fifth hypothesis framing the study. The regressions by state samples, deleting the professional organizational

culture deprivation variables from the analyses, also provided additional confirmation of the predicted relationships between variables reflected in the fifth hypothesis.

Supplemental Data Analyses

A variety of supplemental analyses was completed on the data sets using the total sample of respondents and the respondents in each state. Of interest in these analyses were differences between respondents classified by demographics representing degree level (Masters vs Bachelors), Social Work vs Non-Social Work Degrees, Race, Gender, Current Program Assignment (e.g., Adoption vs Foster Care/Permanency Planning), and years employed in child welfare (e.g., 0, 1, 2-3, 4-7, 8-12 years). Factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) designs with post hoc (Tukey) multiple comparisons tests were used in these analyses with the General Linear Models procedures specified in the Statistical Analysis System (SAS) computer software program. The general strategy was to block the data by the various demographic variables for the total sample and by each state, and to compare main and interaction effects of the blocking (independent) variables on the factored measurement scales developed in the study (including the professional cultural deprivation indices) as dependent variables.

For example, a 2 X 2 X 5 Factorial ANOVA was completed on each study variable derived from the factor analyses (i.e., IRE, HCI, AMS, PSS, VPC, ETSK, EMOT, DEP1, DEP2, DEP3) for two levels of gender (male, female), two levels of degree type (social work, non social work), and five levels of years employed in child welfare (0, 1, 2 - 3, 4 - 7, 8 - 12 years). Because of the possible difficulties brought about by interpreting interaction effects beyond the second order, the ANOVA designs

used were limited to three independent (blocking) variables. The vast majority of these analyses (approximately 90%) yielded no statistically significant ($p<.05$) results. When main effects of variables were evident, post hoc group comparisons, while statistically significant, yielded little information having practical significance given the possible range in scores for the various dependent variables in the analyses.

For example, a factorial ANOVA for the ETSK (self-efficacy for work tasks) variable as a dependent variable, with two degree levels (Masters, Bachelors), two degree majors (social work, other), and five levels of years of employment (0, 1, 2-3, 4-7, 8-12 years) as independent (blocking) variables for the total sample, yielded a statistically significant model ($F=1.84$, $p<.017$) that was largely explained by one statistically significant main effect for years of employment ($F=5.60$, $p<.001$). The post hoc (Tukey) multiple comparison tests for group means showed that this main effect was largely accounted for by mean differences in the 4-7 years experience group and the 8-12 years experience group, both of which had higher ETSK (self-efficacy for work tasks) scores than the group of employees with 1 year or less employment in child welfare. For these post hoc comparisons, the maximum difference between the three mean scores was 2.89 (4-7 years employment group exceeding the 1 year of employment group). Given the range in scores on the ETSK variable (17 to 68), the mean difference in scores between these two groups, though statistically significant ($p<.05$), was considered of little practical importance.

In examining the results for the large number of comparisons made using ANOVA designs with post hoc comparison tests, the following summary statements can

be made about the results emanating from these analyses of the data, when statistically significant differences were evident:

1. Respondents with degrees in social work had consistently higher mean scores than those with degrees in other content areas.
2. Respondents with masters degrees had consistently higher mean scores than those with bachelors degrees.
3. There were only a few differences in mean scores of groups classified by race.
4. There were only a few differences in mean scores for groups classified by gender.
5. There were few differences in scores between states when compared directly or when crossed with other demographic variables in the ANOVA designs.
6. The few mean differences that were statistically significant in post hoc comparisons were too small to be considered of any practical importance.
7. When statistically significant differences between groups were observed, they were more frequently occurring for the intent to remain employed index, the professional organizational culture variable of administrative support, and self-efficacy beliefs, than for the other factored variables.

Chapter Summary

Chapter 4 describes the results of a variety of data analyses completed in the study. These analyses included: (a) descriptive statistics to describe characteristics of the total sample and samples within each state (Louisiana and Arkansas) on the various measures used, (b) factor analyses to refine the measures, (c) internal consistency reliability analyses of measurement scales identified through the factor analyses, (d)

bivariate correlations to examine relationships among the study variables and to test hypotheses framing the study, (e) multiple regression analyses to further test hypotheses and to examine the extent to which various combinations of the study independent variables predicted variation in child welfare employees intentions to remain employed, and (f) a series of analyses of variance and post hoc multiple comparison tests to explore differences among various groups classified by selected demographic variables (e.g., race, gender, degree level). Chapter 5 that follows includes a discussion of major findings and conclusions of the study and their implications for theory, research and practice.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS

This chapter presents a brief overview of the study that includes its conceptualization, purpose, design, and intended contributions to knowledge. A summary of the major findings and conclusions of the study are subsequently presented and these are followed by a discussion of the implications of the findings for theory, research and practice.

Overview of the Study

This study emanated from the research literature and professional concerns in child welfare pertaining to the important problem of high turnover of professional staff, particularly during the early years of employment. Much of the extant literature has focused on trying to understand child welfare employee turnover from a job stress and psychological burnout perspective. This study was framed from an alternative perspective and a research design was developed to better understand personal and organizational factors predictive of child welfare employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare. A conceptual framework was developed to for the study to depict hypothesized linkages between and among the study variables and to guide analyses of the data (see Chapter 1). The framework included two personal, psychological constructs: (a) human caring and self-efficacy, and (b) a complex organizational variable (professional organizational culture). These variables were studied as factors related to and predictive of professional employees' expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare.

The human caring variable was grounded in the prior conceptual and empirical work of Batson (1990), Batson, Fultz, & Schoenrade (1987), and Moffett (1993). The self-efficacy variable was grounded in social cognitive theory and the work of Bandura (1997), and a new measure of self-efficacy beliefs in child welfare settings was developed. The professional organizational culture variable was derived from the prior conceptual and empirical work of Cavanagh (1997) and Olivier, et al. (1998). These variables were conceptualized as independent variables within the study design. A new measure of employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare was developed for the study and used as a dependent variable within the study design.

The design of the study was prompted by the lack of comprehensive models in the literature to address personal and organizational factors predictive of employee retention in child welfare settings. Thus, this study was the first known large-scale study in child welfare to examine linkages between child welfare professionals' intentions to remain employed in child welfare, and a combination of important, theory-based personal characteristics variables (human caring and self-efficacy) and elements of professional work culture. It was also the first known multi-state study.

Measures for the study variables were major revisions and extensions of self report measures that had been used in prior research in both child welfare, nursing and education contexts, as well as newly developed measures. These included measures of: (a) employees' expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare, (b) the affective component of human caring, (c) self-efficacy beliefs, and (d) elements of professional organizational culture. Five hypotheses were developed for the study that

predicted positive linkages between human caring, self-efficacy beliefs, elements of professional organizational culture, and employees' expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare.

Data for the study were collected in the early spring of 2000 from all child welfare employees in two states (Louisiana and Arkansas), using anonymous mail out survey procedures. A total of 941 useable returns were available for analysis. Data analyses included exploratory factor analyses of all measures, reliability analyses of factored measures, extensive descriptive statistics to examine characteristics of the sample(s) and the measures, bivariate correlation and regression analyses to test hypotheses, and a variety of supplemental analyses to explore additional questions of interest. The sections that follow state the research hypotheses framing the study and provide a summary of the major findings and conclusions of the study.

Research Hypotheses

Five hypotheses stated in predictive form were used to guide the design of the study and to analyze the study data. These hypotheses were as follows:

Hypothesis 1

There is a statistically significant ($p<.05$) positive relationship between professional child welfare staff members' self-reported levels of human caring and their expressions of intents to remain employed in child welfare.

Hypothesis 2

There is a statistically significant ($p<.05$), positive relationship between child welfare staff members' self-reported self-efficacy levels and their expressions of intents to remain employed in child welfare.

Hypothesis 3

There is a statistically significant ($p<.05$), positive relationship between child welfare staff members' self-reported perceptions of professional organizational culture and their expressions of intents to remain employed in child welfare.

Hypothesis 4

There is a statistically significant ($p<.05$) negative relationship between child welfare staff members's perceptions of professional organizational culture deprivation and their expressed intents to remain employed in child welfare.

Hypothesis 5

The combination of child welfare staff personal and professional organizational culture perceptions accounts for more variation in their expressions of intents to remain employed in child welfare than either of these factors considered alone.

Major Findings and Conclusions

Major Finding Number One

The hypothesized relationship between levels of human caring and employees' intents to remain employed in child welfare reflected in the first research hypothesis was corroborated.

Conclusion

The affective component of human caring is an important element that contributes to the decision of child welfare staff to remain employed in child welfare.

Major Finding Number Two

The hypothesized relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and child welfare staff members' intents to remain employed in child welfare reflected in the second research hypothesis was corroborated.

Conclusion

Self-efficacy beliefs about work tasks and self-efficacy motivation and persistence are important factors that contribute to the decision of child welfare staff to remain employed in child welfare.

Major Finding Number Three

The hypothesized relationship between child welfare staff members' perceptions of professional organizational culture and their intents to remain employed in child welfare reflected in the third research hypothesis was corroborated.

Conclusion

A positive, professional organizational culture contributes to the decision of child welfare staff to remain employed in child welfare.

Major Finding Number Four

The hypothesized relationship between child welfare staff members' perceptions of professional organizational culture deprivation and their intents to remain employed in child welfare reflected in the fourth research hypothesis was corroborated.

Conclusion

Child welfare staff members' perceptions of professional culture deprivation is an impediment to child welfare staffs' expressions of intent to remain employed in child welfare.

Major Finding Number Five

The hypothesized relationship between combinations of personal and professional organizational factors predictive of child welfare employees' intents to remain employed in child welfare reflected in the fifth research hypothesis was corroborated.

Conclusion

A combination of personal and professional organizational factors are needed to more fully explain child welfare employees' intents to remain employed in child welfare, than either personal or organizational factors alone. Most important are child welfare staff members' perceptions of the quality of administrative support for staff and their self-efficacy beliefs toward work tasks and self-efficacy persistence and motivation.

Major Finding Number Six

The measures developed and used in the study demonstrated reasonable psychometric qualities (validity and reliability). The empirically derived latent constructs reflected in the measures demonstrate rather strong reliabilities across different work contexts in two states. Thus, perceptions of child welfare staff in different work contexts are consistent and rather homogeneous relative to both personal and professional organizational culture factors.

Conclusion

The factored versions of the measures developed and used in the study can be used in future studies with confidence placed in the constructs they purport to measure, and with confidence that data collected with the measures in future studies will be reasonably free of measurement error.

Major Finding Number Seven

There were no large or meaningful differences between the two states studied (Louisiana, Arkansas) in child welfare staff members' levels of human caring, self-efficacy, perceptions of professional organizational culture, or intentions to remain employed in child welfare.

Conclusion

Overall levels of the personal characteristics of human caring, self-efficacy beliefs, elements of professional organizational culture, and expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare among child welfare staff are generalizable across states. The general levels of self-reports for the measures used in this study will predictably show only slight variations from one state to the next, even in states that are somewhat different in administrative organization to deliver services (i.e., child welfare specializations vs workers assigned to families over the duration of the family's involvement with the agency). In the collective, child welfare staff have similar levels of human caring and self-efficacy beliefs, similar perceptions of dimensions of professional organizational culture (and culture deprivation), and levels of intention to remain employed in child welfare across various work contexts.

Supplemental Findings

Of additional interest in this study were comparisons of various groups of respondents on the study variables by various demographic categories (i.e., race, gender, years of employment, degree level, degree type). The large number of analyses completed with these variables between respondents classified by race and/or gender showed very few statistically significant differences. When these did occur, most were too small to be of any practical or theoretical importance. Over all of the supplemental analyses, two visible trends emerged. Respondents with Masters degrees reported higher levels of human caring and self-efficacy than those with Bachelors degrees. This group (Masters degree) also rated themselves higher on the intent to remain employed measure

than those with Bachelors degrees. The same trends in the results were noted when comparisons were made between respondent groups classified as possessing or not possessing a content degree in social work (either Masters or Bachelors). It should be noted here that the sample sizes for these analyses were rather large, and statistical power was thus enhanced. However, in most of these comparisons, though documenting trends in the results, differences between groups, in all comparisons, were rather small given the possible score ranges on the various measures.

Discussion and Implications of Major Findings

The study examined linkages between the affective component of human caring, self-efficacy for work tasks and self-efficacy motivation, perceptions of actual and preferred dimensions of professional organizational culture, and child welfare employees' expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare. The study was considered important because it was a multi-state, quantitative study using rather large samples of child welfare staff (n=941). Only two small sample, qualitative studies of retention of employees in child welfare have appeared in the literature before the present study (Reagh, 1994; Rycraft, 1994). A few small quantitative studies of agency/university IV-E partnerships, not exclusively child welfare employees, are currently being published (Hopkins, et al. 1999; Lewandowski, 1998;) and presented at conferences (Brown & Chavkin, 2000; Dickinson & Perry, 1998; Gansle & Ellett, 1997; Harris, 1996; Okamura & Jones, 1998). Additionally, the study was considered important because it investigated theory-rich personal and organizational factors linked to the retention of professional staff in child welfare organizations. The alternative research perspective

reflected in the vast majority of prior studies has focused on employee turnover and burnout. Much of the literature has also been rather silent from the theory perspective.

The most important findings from this study were that personal characteristics (human caring and self-efficacy) and professional culture variables show positive associations with employees' expressed intents to remain employed in child welfare. Thus, the results validate these variables as potentially important predictors of retention in child welfare. While some turnover in any employment setting may be desirable (e.g., due to job-related incompetence), understanding factors that predict retention of employees is highly desirable. This study clearly showed that elements of the professional work culture are positively linked to retention in child welfare. Thus, building and encouraging the maintenance of a strong work culture reflecting professional norms and values centered on administrative support, professional sharing and support among colleagues, and organizational vision/professionalism/commitment go hand in hand with the holding power of the child welfare organization (and perhaps child welfare as a profession) for employees.

In addition, findings from the study show that self-efficacy beliefs about the capability to accomplish work tasks and self-efficacy motivation are linked to employee's reports of intent to remain employed in child welfare. Those who care about clients and who have efficacy beliefs reflecting strong work motivation and persistence in the face of obstacles/barriers and frequently encountered failures, are those with the highest levels of intent to remain employed in child welfare, and those as well, who are not likely to be reflected in job turnover statistics. The bivariate correlation and regression analyses

completed documented child welfare staff members' perceptions of administrative support as an important element of professional organizational culture linked to their intentions to remain employed in child welfare. Additionally, self-efficacy beliefs related to motivation and persistence in the face of barriers/obstacles related to accomplishing work-related outcomes was documented as an important predictor of employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare. These findings were evident in both standard (stepwise) regression analyses completed with the total sample (n=941) of respondents, as well as in two different hierarchical regression models in which the order or entry of personal and organizational culture variables was deliberately controlled. There was also evidence for a sub sample of employees with 0-3 years work experience, that the professional organizational culture factor reflecting vision, professionalism, and professional commitment was the most important contributor to their intentions to remain employed in child welfare.

These findings make intuitive sense. But, more importantly, they identify rich personal and psychological constructs that can become the focus of those preparing child welfare professionals (primarily colleges and universities), those selecting new employees (agencies), and those developing, mentoring and supporting child welfare employees (e.g., supervisory staff, professional colleagues). From the more practical perspective, the findings reported here document the importance of nurturing these important human characteristics and developing a strong, professional work culture to enhance employees' expressed intents to remain, and subsequent retention in child welfare.

Implications for Theory

The results of this study have implications for theory and theory development on several levels. First, the social cognitive conception of self-efficacy beliefs reflected in the work of Bandura (1978, 1986, 1987, 1997) and others has been extended to the child welfare context in this study. According to Bandura, individuals with strong self-efficacy beliefs are highly motivated and persistent in the pursuit of attainment of goals, particularly when they encounter barriers and obstacles to goal attainment. In addition, those with strong efficacy beliefs persist in the face of failure to accomplish goals. Given the difficult and often stressful work environment in which child welfare staff function, the results reported that positively link the strength of self-efficacy to employees' intentions to remain in child welfare, extend social cognitive theory into the actual practice setting. The findings add predictive validity to the measures developed to assess self-efficacy beliefs among child welfare staff. As well, they extend the nomological network (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955) and explanatory power of self-efficacy theory to yet another applied setting. The factor analysis results of the self-efficacy measure clearly identified two factors. The first factor reflected self-efficacy beliefs about specific work tasks, and the second factor reflected self-efficacy beliefs about performance outcomes and effectiveness. The separation of these two measurement dimensions is conceptually and operationally consistent with Bandura's (1997) discussion of self-efficacy beliefs, associated behavioral outcomes, and theory of triadic, reciprocal causation. Thus, the findings of this study continue to document the rich utility of the self-efficacy construct

in explaining a wide variety of human behaviors in professional contexts (Bandura, 1978; Pajares, 1996; Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998).

The human caring construct studied was grounded in a body of conceptual literature that has apparently reflected researchers' and writers' struggles with the nature of this rather elusive variable. Prior to this study, there have only been a few attempts to develop conceptually grounded, psychometrically sound measures of human caring (e.g., Moffett, 1993; Wolfe, 1986). To provide an empirical basis for advancing theory and to test theory-derived hypotheses, sound measurement is a necessity. The measure used in this study was adapted from a measure originally developed by Moffett for use with nurses. In the present study, the human caring measure was positively correlated with two dimensions of self-efficacy (self-efficacy for work tasks and self-efficacy motivation). These correlations were much stronger ($r=.39$, $r=.38$, respectively) than the correlation between the human caring measure and employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare. These findings suggest that human caring may be an important part of the self-efficacy construct as it influences intentions and behavior in child welfare. Thus, self-efficacy beliefs may take on different cognitive, affective and behavioral elements within different contexts. In his most recent work, Bandura (1997) alludes to this possibility.

In non-service settings, and outside the helping professions, for example in military organizations, the nomological net framing self-efficacy beliefs may be theoretically and operationally different than in professions such as social work, medicine and education. Thus, in military settings, human caring may not be reflected in decisions

and actions selected and pursued as a consequence of strong self-efficacy beliefs. It seems quite logical in child welfare settings on the other hand, and in keeping with self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1997), that strong human caring would enhance the self-efficacy beliefs of professional child welfare staff by augmenting their persistence in accomplishing difficult tasks, with often difficult clients, who face difficult problems in living.

From the organizational perspective, the results of this study show how various elements of professional organizational culture are linked to, and can predict variation in child welfare employees' intents to remain employed in child welfare. A general theory of organizational holding power, (i.e., the sum total of positive and negative valences of the organization to attract and hold its staff) in child welfare settings, would seemingly need to accommodate the findings from this study. Staff members' positive perceptions of administrative practices and support were the highest organizational culture correlate of the intent to stay index (r=.34), though professional sharing and support and vision/ professionalism/commitment were also positively correlated with employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare (r=.26, r=.23, respectively). Though somewhat moderate in magnitude, these findings suggest that elements of professional organizational culture are important to the possible development of more general organizational theories such as theories of holding power.

For child welfare staff in this study, positive perceptions of dimensions of professional organizational culture were clearly linked to the holding power (intent to remain employed) of the child welfare organization and work setting. Interestingly, the

human caring and self-efficacy variables included in this study were not directly linked to elements of professional organizational culture. This finding suggests that employees' perceptions of these personal and organizational culture variables make relatively independent contributions to their expressed intentions to remain employed in child welfare. Though the personal and organizational culture variables were not strongly linked in the bivariate correlation analyses reported in this study, the regression analyses clearly documented the added value of self-efficacy beliefs in predicting/explaining employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare. The collective findings of the study suggest that a theory of organizational holding power (the ability of the organization to attract and retain its employees) for child welfare employees would have to accommodate important personal characteristics (e.g., human caring and self-efficacy) as well as professional organizational culture characteristics. These findings are somewhat conceptually inconsistent with the framework in which this study was initially designed and developed (see Chapter 1).

Implications for Practice

There are several implications for practice of the findings of this study for child welfare and the larger social work profession. First, there were trends in the results that suggested that those with Masters degrees vs Bachelors degrees, and those with a degree content focus in social work vs other content areas, were more positive in their perceptions of personal human caring, self-efficacy, and intentions to remain employed in child welfare. Over the past two decades, a large number of non-social work degree employees have been hired in child welfare, which may have contributed to the de-professionalization of this specialized area of social work practice (Costin, et a., 1996;

Ellett & Millar, 1996; Leighninger & Ellett, 1998; Pecora, et al. 1992). Though somewhat moderate in strength, the findings in this study suggest that preparation in social work rather than other academic areas may facilitate employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare (Brown & Chavkin, 2000; Dickinson & Perry, 1998; Hopkins, et al. 1999; Lewandowski, 1998, Gansle & Ellett, 1997; Harris, 1996; Okamura, & Jones, 1998; Zlotnik, 1998). Those preparing future child welfare staff at the pre-service level (i.e., colleges and universities) and those establishing credentialing and licensing requirements as well (policy makers) can be informed by this finding about the importance of educational levels to practice in child welfare.

The findings of this study also suggest that establishing and maintaining a professional organizational culture that includes adequate administrative support, professional sharing among colleagues, and expressions of vision/professionalism/ commitment are important organizational elements of employee retention. Administrative support in organizations appears to be a key element of employee retention in child welfare. Developing a positive, professional culture in child welfare that supports and engages employees with one another is an important organizational leadership concern that has many implications. Among these leadership concerns is establishing and implementing mentoring programs for new employees that support and sustain their efforts during the early years of employment. Research shows that turnover during the early years in child welfare is the most critical supply and demand problem (Liederman, 1998).

Even though positive perspectives of administrative support in this study were related to employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare, it should also be remembered that the lowest score for the three dimensions of professional organizational culture measured, in both Louisiana and Arkansas, was for the Administrative Support dimension. In addition, the largest professional organizational culture deprivation score in both states was for the Administrative Support measure. Deprivation scores were higher for Louisiana than for Arkansas. These findings suggest that this dimension of professional organizational culture should perhaps be given priority in organizational development efforts designed to retain child welfare employees.

In this regard, it was interesting to note in this study that the strongest correlate of intention to remain employed for employees in their first three years of employment, was the professional organizational culture dimension of Vision/Professionalism/ Commitment, rather than Administrative Support. New employees in child welfare apparently value clear communications within the organization about the difficulties of the job. Professionalism within the organization and a professional vision of what their colleagues and the agency administration expect and value are also seen as important by new employees. This learned and satisfied, employees with intentions to remain employed in subsequent years view ongoing administrative support as an important professional organizational culture factor related to intentions to remain employed.

Of interest as well in this study, was the finding that employee groups classified by years of employment differed little in their self-reports on the study measures. At the same time, the most important variables predicting intention to remain employed varied

somewhat from one group to another. These findings may have implications for developing elements of professional organizational culture that employees see as varied in importance as they advance through their careers in child welfare. Organizational culture factors linked to retention appear to change as employees remain employed over time.

It should be noted that the cultural deprivation index used in this study was negatively correlated with intentions to remain employed in child welfare for both caseworker/social worker and supervisor groups, but not for area and regional office administrators. For direct services workers and supervisors, differences between preferred and actual views of professional organizational culture (cultural deprivation) were negatively related to intentions to remain employed. For area and regional office administrators, on the other hand, perceptions of cultural deprivation were positively related to intentions to remain employed. These findings suggest perceptions of professional organizational culture may contribute quite differently to employment intentions in these groups and with years of investment in the organization. Agency administrators, for example, typically have rather lengthy employment, MSW degrees combined with little intention to leave child welfare before retirement. Additionally, they may be well aware, and reliably report, elements of cultural deprivation in their organizations. They may also be professionally challenged by differences in actual and preferred elements of culture and view the rewards of bringing about positive organizational culture change as a key factor in their desire to remain employed in senior administrative positions. Less experienced and less organizationally invested employees

apparently view cultural deprivation as a negative state of affairs relative to their intentions to remain employed in child welfare. Thus, senior administrators who work to reduce cultural deprivation in their organizations may well be fulfilling their own job satisfaction motives and challenges, and strengthening their employees' intentions to remain employed as well.

This study also has implications for how agencies recruit and select employees who possess characteristics that appear to be important elements of employee retention in child welfare. Developing or modifying existing measures of human caring and self-efficacy for child welfare, continuing to establish their reliability and validity for decision making, and then using them along with social work degrees and other relevant data evaluated in the selection and hiring process, might well lead to a more professional, competent and stable work force in child welfare.

The results of this study showed that approximately 18 to 20% of the variance in child welfare employees' intentions to remain employed can be predicted (accounted for) by elements of professional organizational culture (particularly administrative support) and self-efficacy beliefs. While this may not appear to be a large percentage of variance accounted for by the combination of these factors, it is considered important and rather statistically robust when reflecting on many other factors driving intentions to remain employed. For example, financial, personal/social and professional incentives, geographic location, boundedness by nearby relatives/family, general levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the community in which one lives, and a host of other factors also undoubtedly contribute to child welfare employee's intentions to

remain employed. Thus, accounting for 18 to 20% of the variation in intentions to remain employed in child welfare, as was done in this two-state, large sample study, is considered an important, as well as a rather robust statistical finding.

Many factors related to employee retention in child welfare (such as those listed above), are quite distal relative to the actual job setting (e.g., geographical location, policy-based mandates, boundedness by family), while others are quite proximal and integral to the work setting (e.g., mentoring, organizational culture, social recognition, self-efficacy beliefs). Distal variables related to retention are typically not under the control of the employing organization, or perhaps even the individual employee. However, more proximal variables can be influenced by organizational members and/or the individual employee. Social recognition and verbal persuasion related to accomplishing important work tasks, for example, is a proximal variable that enhances self-efficacy beliefs, and more than likely reflects elements of professional organizational culture as well. Thus, the findings of this study suggest that elements of professional organizational culture and self-efficacy beliefs linked to human caring are important elements of intentions to remain employed in child welfare. As proximal variables, they might be given priority in both organizational improvement efforts and in efforts to select and retain employees and reduce undesirable turnover in child welfare.

State comparisons made in this study provide some insights about differences in the child welfare work forces in Louisiana and Arkansas and the need to perhaps move toward greater professionalization in child welfare. The results clearly showed larger percentages of employees in Louisiana with Masters degrees (40.0%) than in Arkansas

(8.7%). Additionally, the age of employees and years of employment and experience in child welfare in Louisiana were considerably higher than in Arkansas. For example, in Louisiana, 18.9% of employees reported they had been employed from 0 to 3 years. In Arkansas, this same length of employment category percentage was 45.8. These differences may be partially attributable to recent legislation in Arkansas in response to a settlement agreement in a class action suit that greatly increased the number of new employees in child welfare in that state. In Louisiana, the percentage of child welfare employees reporting their age as 40 years or more was approximately 68.0%. In Arkansas, the percentage for this same age category was 43.5%. In Arkansas, a high percentage of child welfare employees (51.2%) reported multiple program assignments. In Louisiana, however, only 16.6% of employees reported multiple program assignments. These results point to considerable differences between work forces in the two states have several important implications.

First, demographics for Louisiana suggest a longer history (a condition of employment until 20 years ago) of emphasis on the importance of the Masters in Social Work degree as the preferred professional credential, including pay differential relative to the Bachelors degree, than in Arkansas. Thus, the Louisiana work force, as defined by degree level and pay differential, is somewhat more professionalized than the Arkansas work force. On the other hand, there appears a need in both states to move toward greater professionalization through requiring social work degrees as a minimum qualification for employment in child welfare. A large percentage of employees in this study (57%) reported degrees in areas other than social work. In Arkansas, 70.1%

reported non-Social work degrees, and in Louisiana this percentage was 51.5%. These results, and the obvious differences between the two states, are consistent with the rationale for national calls to re-professionalize child welfare (Costin, et al., 1996; Ellett & Millar, 1996; Helfgott, 1991; Lieberman, et al., 1988; Pecora, et al., 1989; Pecora, et al., 1992; Rittner & Wodarski, 1999; Zlotnik, 1998). These findings also suggest that knowledge, skills and abilities and levels of performance in child welfare might well be improved by requiring a social work degree as a professional credential and perhaps requiring the Masters degree in social work for employee advancement in child welfare (Albers, Reilly, & Rittner, 1993; Booz-Allen & Hamilton, 1987; Dhooper, Royce, & Wolfe, 1990; Olsen & Holmes, 1982).

Secondly, the differences in ages of child welfare staffs in the two states suggest that Louisiana will have a greater need to replace retiring employees with new hires in the years ahead than will Arkansas. Thus, there may well be a much greater loss in experience and expertise in child welfare in Louisiana than in Arkansas over the next decade. To the extent that there is no requirement for entry level or promotional credentials of social work degrees in the future, Louisiana may indeed lose a considerable amount of expertise, leadership and job performance quality in the years ahead. In Arkansas, the low percentage of staff with degrees in social work, when combined with a relatively young work force, suggests the possible maintenance of employees with lower skills, abilities, and performance quality than desired in the years ahead.

Third, the findings point out the importance of developing more targeted and improved entering credential and employee selection practices. The results for Louisiana and Arkansas reported here clearly show that large percentages of child welfare employees have no specific credential (degree) in social work. Child welfare agencies might increase their efforts to recruit graduates of social work programs, develop agency/university partnerships (as in IV-E programs), and work toward differential pay scales for entrance into, and promotion in child welfare positions that favor those with social work degrees over those with other degrees. State child welfare agencies are, of course, bound by legislative mandates, civil service/merit systems and other policies which may have to be considerably changed if goals to re-professionalize child welfare, and ultimately to improve services to clients, are to be realized.

Implications for Future Research

In some ways, and as with most research, the study reported here has raised more questions than it answered. The questions are far too numerous to completely address here, but they provide an impetus for thinking through future research priorities. First, from the conceptual perspective, this study attempted to refocus concern for research on turnover in child welfare from its traditional focus on psychological stress and burnout, to what was believed to be a more productive focus on factors contributing to retention. Intention to remain employed in child welfare was measured by a new nine-item measure that contained three items reflecting perceptions of leaving child welfare employment. These items were recoded for subsequent analyses of the data. While negatively

correlated statistically, the strength of relationships between retention items and intention to leave items on the new IRE measure varied considerably (r=-.61 to r=-.27, with -.35 to -.45 most typical). These findings, along with the results of the factor analyses completed, suggest that the set of IRE items used in this study measure a global construct pertaining to employment intentions of child welfare staff. The results also suggest that the behaviors defining retention and turnover are indeed statistical opposites. However, and not investigated in this study, the motivational basis for the decision to either remain or leave employment in child welfare may be quite different for those who leave and for those who stay. Future research studies that include follow-up qualitative methods can more than likely shed light on these important issues. While there is support from the results of this study, that remaining in or leaving employment in child welfare are statistical opposites, it is not yet clear whether the motivational basis and associated decision-making processes related to these decisions are direct opposites.

The turnover and burnout literature has focused on work-related stress variables as important in the decision to leave employment in child welfare. This study clearly showed that administrative support (for employees) and self-efficacy beliefs are important factors contributing to employees' intentions to remain employed in child welfare. Thus, the motivational (and conceptual as well) basis for these two decisions may be quite different. Alternatively, the professional organizational and personal factors explored in this study, may well serve to mediate cognitive processes leading to the decision to either remain or leave employment in child welfare settings. The observations and findings reported here raise a considerable number of questions about

the motivational basis of behavior in organizations, personal characteristics of employees, and developing a sound measurement system that operationalizes factors contributing to these quite different, important decisions in child welfare. Additional research studies are needed within this important line of inquiry to better understand the complex relationships between the employment decision, personal and organizational factors contributing to this decision, and associated decision-making processes.

Second, future studies might be completed with confirmatory factor analysis procedures using the measures developed in this study to see if the latent structures of the measures can be statistically replicated. The use of confirmatory factor analyses in future research can also more formally move this line of inquiry toward empirically validated theoretical systems to broaden our understanding of the complex relationships between personal and organizational factors, and decision-making processes related to intentions to remain or leave employment in child welfare. The factor analyses of the measures completed in this study were considered exploratory in nature since the measures were rather thorough revisions of existing measures originally developed for use in other contexts, or measures specifically developed for this study. If the latent structures of these measures hold, and if they continue to measure with adequate reliability, additional construct validity evidence will be forthcoming for these measures. This additional information can support their general utility in continuing a line of inquiry about employee retention in child welfare that extends the work reported here. These measures might also demonstrate utility in future research studies in social work contexts other than child welfare. One of the apparent shortcomings of past research in child

welfare retention and turnover has been inadequate measurement, both conceptually and operationally. This study has attempted to address, in part, these shortcomings.

Third, mixed methodologies (quantitative and qualitative) might be used in future research to study the problem of turnover and to enhance understanding of factors that contribute to retention of employees in child welfare. This study used only quantitative methods. From inspection of the results, it was clear that follow-up qualitative research methods could provide more in-depth understanding of some of the quantitative results. Though quite beyond the scope of this study, a variety of sampling strategies (e.g., purposeful selection of statistical outlier cases) could have been used to select interesting cases for follow-up qualitative research. These cases could be individual child welfare staff at different levels, or perhaps entire organizational units with differing quantitative results profiles. Future mixed methods studies can undoubtedly add depth to our understanding of turnover and retention of employees in child welfare organizations as this important line of inquiry moves forward.

In his work on culture, Fullan (1993) says, "Teachers are privileged and burdened with the responsibility of becoming better inner and outer learners who will connect to wider and wider circles of society". The analogy may be drawn for child welfare professionals, that they are both privileged and burdened to make a positive difference in the lives of children and families through accurate assessment, considered decision making and intervention for the safety and permanency of children. Thus, employing and retaining competent staff are integral to the execution of the child welfare organization's mission. This study addressed these important professional and research concerns.

Assumptions

The study made the following assumptions:

1. Respondents of participating state child welfare agencies were a representative sample for the study.
2. Participants' self-reported responses to the various measures were valid (honest, truthful).
3. Measures specifically developed or adapted/adopted for the study would demonstrate adequate psychometric qualities (i.e., validity and reliability).
4. Common method variance would not be a major factor affecting the dependability (trustworthiness) or the data.

Limitations

1 Although all professional level child welfare staff in participating state child welfare agencies were asked to participate, completion of the instruments was voluntary.

2. Generalizability of the results depended upon the participation of invited states for specific geographic regions or states with similar organizational employment requirements.
3. Participating states were rural, Southern states and the results may not generalize to less rural, more urban states in other geographical areas
4. The demographic results represent only those for participants and may not reflect absolute population parameters/characteristics in the two states studied.

5. The unit of analysis in this study was the individual child welfare professional. No analyses were complete with organizational units as the statistical unit of analysis. Thus, the results reflect variation and covariation in perceptions among individuals rather than variation and covariation among organizational units.

Chapter Summary

Chapter 5 of this document presented an overview of the study, reiterated the research hypotheses, summarized major findings and conclusions of the study, and provided a discussion of the findings and their implications for theory, practice and future research. Key assumptions on which the study was based and limitations of the study were also described.

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APPENDIX A

EXPERT STUDY TASKS AND MEASURES

CW Survey Expert Study

As a social work professional with years of experience and developed expertise in child welfare (CW), you are requested to participate in an expert validation study of a proposed survey. I am finalizing instruments to administer to child welfare staff in states of our federal region. Your review of the following instruments for consistency and clarity is requested.

Directions: (1) Please read the definition of the concept in ***italicized bold type***, then indicate whether you think an employee's agreement with each of the questionnaire items is indicative of the definition by **circling Y for Yes, or N for No.** (2) Please use a highlight marking pen to identify any items which are not clear and feel free to rewrite the item in a way that enhances its clarity.

Child Welfare Intent to Remain Index

Intent to remain in CW is derived from a larger understanding of the personal, psychological and work context factors that have cognitive, affective and behavioral elements that contribute to an employee's decision to remain employed in CW settings. From this perspective, individuals who desire to remain employed in CW, make a personal determination to persist in CW because the career benefits centered on professional growth and self actualization, professional purpose and mission, professional needs gratification, and importance of their work are valued more than other job factors such as financial incentives, characteristics of the general work environment and associated work tensions and frustrations. Judge whether each item is an indicator of the larger idea of the **Intent to Remain Index** by **circling Y for Yes, or N for No.**.

		Yes	No
1.	I intend to remain in child welfare as my long-term professional career.	Y	N
2.	I will remain in child welfare even though I might be offered a comparable position outside of child welfare with a higher salary.	Y	N
3.	I would leave this job tomorrow if I was offered a comparable job with less stress.	Y	N
4.	I am committed to working in child welfare even though it can be quite stressful at times.	Y	N
5.	I am actively seeking other employment.	Y	N
6.	I feel the personal and professional gratification of working in child welfare to be greater than those in other professions.	Y	N
7.	I frequently think about quitting my job.	Y	N
8.	The personal and professional benefits outweigh the difficulties and frustrations of working in child welfare.	Y	N
9.	My intention to remain employed in child welfare is stronger than that of most of my colleagues.	Y	N

Human Caring Inventory-Social Work

Responsivity defined by Moffett (1993), is "the tendency to be supportive, nurturing, and responsive to the needs of others". Now judge whether an employee's agreement with the following items is an indicator of **Responsivity in Human Caring. NOTE**: The items are not listed sequentially.

		Yes	No
2.	I'm usually the first to offer help when someone needs something.	Y	N
6.	I would delay personal plans in order to help a client or colleague who needed assistance.	Y	N
8.	I advocate for clients who can't or don't speak for themselves.	Y	N
12.	I am bothered when I can't honor a commitment to a client or colleague.	Y	N
17.	It is important that individuals for whom I am responsible know that I personally care about them.	Y	N

Receptivity as defined by Moffett (1993) is "the tendency of an individual to easily form relationships and to be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others". Now judge whether an employee's agreement with the following items is an indicator of **Receptivity in Human Caring. NOTE**: The items are not listed sequentially.

		Yes	No
1.	I find it easy to read clients' and colleagues' feelings.	Y	N
7.	I don't particularly enjoy finding out about other people.	Y	N
9.	I usually try to avoid becoming involved in clients' problems.	Y	N
13.	When someone is having troubles, I am sensitive to their feelings and needs.	Y	N
14.	I have trouble relating with clients who abuse or neglect their children.	Y	N

Moral/Ethical Consciousness as defined by Moffett (1993), "is the tendency to treat others with human dignity and respect and to take responsibility for one's actions for the welfare of others". Now judge whether an employee's agreement with the following items is an indicator of **Moral/Ethical Consciousness in Human Caring. NOTE**: The items are not listed sequentially.

		Yes	No
3.	It bothers me that some clients don't receive the services they need.	Y	N
4.	I try to identify and examine my personal biases when I perform my job duties.	Y	N
11.	Preserving a client's dignity is as important as delivering direct services.	Y	N
16.	Parents should be informed of the consequences of their parenting practices at the outset of agency intervention.	Y	N
18.	I speak up when practices seem contrary to the welfare of others.	Y	N

Professional Culture Elements Questionnaire-Child Welfare

Vision/Leadership refers to norms, values, interests and beliefs shared among child welfare staff about what the agency aspires to become and the various roles and responsibilities agency personnel have related to accomplishing agency goals. *Indicate whether you think each of the items is indicative of this definition by **circling Y for yes, or N for no.*** Now judge whether an employee's agreement with the following items is an indicator of **vision/leadership in professional organizational culture. NOTE:** The items are not listed sequentially.

In this office, child welfare staff:		**Yes**	**No**
2.	find that supervisors/administrators are willing to help child welfare staff when problems arise.	Y	N
4.	view leadership roles as shared by staff and administrators.	Y	N
9.	are encouraged by administrators to provide leadership for new projects.	Y	N
10.	find that administrators provide visible, ongoing support for innovations and ideas.	Y	N
12.	find that encouragement is provided for those who are furthering their social work education or are involved in professional development activities.	Y	N
13.	are encouraged by administrators to be the best that they can be in their assigned positions.	Y	N
16.	cooperatively participate with administrators in developing new agency programs and policies.	Y	N
17.	clearly understand the agency vision for child welfare programs.	Y	N
18.	give priority to child safety and permanence above all other agency goals.	Y	N
20.	are unified in their commitment to accomplish the agency's vision for child welfare.	Y	N
21.	find that administrators allow sufficient professional autonomy to make decisions in their work.	Y	N
23.	believe that members of the administration show a genuine concern for them as professionals in their work.	Y	N
26.	find that administrators are empathetic with work-related problems and difficulties.	Y	N
28.	find that cohesion and consensus among agency staff are valued and encouraged.	Y	N
29.	receive the assistance they need from administrators to enhance the quality of case decisions and services to clients.	Y	N

Collegial teaching and learning refers to norms, values, interests and beliefs shared among child welfare staff about the quantity and quality of interpersonal and professional interactions and relationships among staff that enhance personal and collective teaching and learning opportunities within the organization as a total learning community. *Indicate whether you think each of the items is indicative of this definition by **circling Y for yes, or N for no.*** Now judge whether an employee's agreement with the following items is an indicator of **collegial teaching and learning in professional organizational culture**. **NOTE**: The items are not listed sequentially.

In this office, child welfare staff:		**Yes**	**No**
8.	treat their colleagues as professionals when there are differences of opinions.	Y	N
11.	participate in collaborative sharing about successes and problems in their work.	Y	N
15.	are personally acknowledged by colleagues for their efforts and endeavors.	Y	N
19.	professionally share and learn from one another.	Y	N
22.	share work experiences with each other to improve the effectiveness of client services.	Y	N
24.	encourage each other to exercise professional judgment when making decisions.	Y	N
25.	are willing to provide support and to assist each other when problems arise.	Y	N
27.	accept the need for support from their colleagues.	Y	N
32.	spend time mentoring new employees.	Y	N
34.	feel comfortable with the assistance they receive from colleagues to enhance the quality of their work.	Y	N

Professional Commitment refers to norms, values, interests and beliefs shared among child welfare staff about the extent to which everyday work activities are framed by professional ethics and codes of conduct and reflect child welfare practices designed to improve the quality of services for advancing the lives of children and families in society. *Indicate whether you think each of the items is indicative of this definition by **circling Y for yes, or N for no.*** Now judge whether an employee's agreement with the following items is an indicator of **professional commitment in professional organizational culture**. **NOTE**: The items are not listed sequentially.

In this office, child welfare staff:		**Yes**	**No**
1.	are proud to work in child welfare.	Y	N
3.	spend time in professional reflection about their work.	Y	N
5.	give priority to child safety assessment and permanency planning activities.	Y	N
6.	believe that they can have a positive impact on the lives of most of their clients.	Y	N
7.	use the findings from child welfare research in their work with children and families.	Y	N

In this office, child welfare staff:		Yes	No
14.	are committed to continuous professional development.	Y	N
30.	believe that work in child welfare is important to the children, families, and communities served.	Y	N
31.	continually seek ways to improve child welfare practices.	Y	N
33.	use social work standards, ethics and codes of conduct to frame their child welfare practices.	Y	N

Self-Efficacy Assessment-Social Work

Self-efficacy is derived from the work of Bandura (1997) who defines self-efficacy as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to produce given attainments." (p.3). According to Bandura (1997) human self-efficacy beliefs reflect both outcome expectations (that courses of action in given situations are logically linked to and can accomplish perceived outcomes) and ability estimates (individual's beliefs in their capabilities to successfully execute courses of action to accomplish outcomes). Judge whether each item is an indicator of the larger idea of **self-efficacy** within child welfare by **circling Y for Yes, or N for No.**

1 = *Weak Beliefs* (WB) 2 = *Somewhat Strong Beliefs* (SSB)
3 = *Strong Beliefs* (SB) 4 = *Very Strong Beliefs* (VSB)

The strength of my personal beliefs in my capability to (item statement).....is		WB	SSB	SB	VSB
		Yes		No	
1.	use assessment skills in decision making about child safety is...	Y		N	
2.	regularly expend the energy and effort to accomplish work tasks is...	Y		N	
3.	effectively use interviewing skills is...	Y		N	
4.	engage individuals in strengths and problem identification is...	Y		N	
5.	remain motivated and persist in overcoming difficult or uncertain obstacles to accomplish outcomes for clients is...	Y		N	
6.	provide social work treatment interventions with families whose children are in foster care is...	Y		N	
7.	simultaneously implement reunification and adoption permanency goals (concurrent planning) is...	Y		N	
8.	analyze and synthesize information required for legal actions in child welfare cases is...	Y		N	
9.	be an effective witness in child welfare court hearings is...	Y		N	
10.	communicate critical written information in a way that is well organized and clear is...	Y		N	

The strength of my personal beliefs in my capability to (item statement).....is	WB	SSB	SB	VSB
			Yes	No
11. work effectively with family members in child neglect cases is...			Y	N
12. rebound and persist after failures in my efforts to accomplish work goals is...			Y	N
13. assist children in working through separation from their family members is...			Y	N
14. accurately assess parenting capability is...			Y	N
15. Effectively work with clients and co-workers in culturally sensitive manner is...			Y	N
16. influence my career opportunities in the child welfare organization in which I work is...			Y	N
17. work with child sexual abuse victims, non-offending parents and sexual perpetrators is...			Y	N
18. work effectively within the structure of my state organization is...			Y	N
19. work collaboratively with staff from other community agencies is...			Y	N
20. interpret and apply agency policies in my job assignment is..			Y	N

Use the space below to provide any additional written comments/concerns that do not seem reflected in this survey you would like to make or have about factors that contribute to decisions to remain employed in child welfare work.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please return this survey directly to me, Bert Ellett in room 629 by February 1. If I am not in, you may leave this document in my chair. Your responses will be treated confidentially. Your professional contribution and cooperation in completing this task is greatly appreciated!

January 25, 2000

TO: Selected OCS Staff

FROM: Bert Ellett

RE: Time Study

As you probably know, in my free time I am also a Ph.D. student in the LSU School of Social Work. I am at the stage where I am ready to collect data for my dissertation. My professional concern for improving our child welfare system has led me to my interest in recruitment and retention of skilled child welfare professionals who are expected to carry out complex policies and deliver services to clients in our difficult work context. I believe research on personal and organizational factors predictive of committed and resilient child welfare staff who choose to remain employed in child welfare, is missing in social work literature and is important to know. Studies like mine should yield important information about how to prepare, recruit, select, employ and retain competent, committed child welfare staff.

Briefly, my study will disseminate the attached survey to professional level staff within our Federal DHHS Region state public child welfare agencies. The survey will be completed **voluntarily, anonymously**, and is estimated to require 20 minutes to complete. The final survey will be professionally printed on electronic scan sheets. I need to find out a real estimate of the time it will take participants to complete this survey. Only a few OCS staff are asked to complete the survey at this time and then to provide me with two pieces of information:

1. How long did it take you to complete this survey? _____ **minutes**

2. Are there survey items or instructions which are not clear?

   Part I items #s_____

   Part II items #s_____

   Part III items #s_____

   Part IV items #s_____

   Part V items #s_____

3. Then FAX this single page memo **(NOT THE SURVEY) WITH THE TIME IT TOOK YOU TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY AND ANY ITEMS AND INSTRUCTIONS YOU IDENTIFY AS NEEDING CLARITY TO: Bert Ellett at FAX (225) 342-9087.** You may call me at ph. # (225) 342-6840 if you have any questions or suggestions. **Please return by February 2, 2000.**

Your professional contribution and cooperation in completing this task is greatly appreciated!

APPENDIX B

CHILD WELFARE SURVEY

CHILD WELFARE SURVEY

Definition

This child welfare survey asks you to make a series of judgements about your experiences as a child welfare professional. **Child welfare staff** refers specifically to individuals who are caseworkers/social workers, supervisors, regional/district/state office managers/administrators including trainers/staff developers with responsibility for child abuse/neglect investigations, child protective services, family services, intensive home-based services, foster care, permanency/concurrent planning, adoption, recruitment/training/certification of foster/adoptive families and independent living for youth in foster care.

INTENT TO REMAIN EMPLOYED - CHILD WELFARE

Directions

This section of the survey asks you to make a series of judgements about your personal attitudes and beliefs. The best answer is the one that most accurately reflects your personal views and opinions. Please respond to each statement using the scale provided below. Fill in one number for each item that best corresponds to the strength of your disagreement or agreement using a **# 2 pencil.**

SCALE: 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD) 2 = Disagree (D) 3 = Agree (A) 4 = Strongly Agree (SA)

		SD	D	A	SA
1.	I intend to remain in child welfare as my long-term professional career.	1	2	3	4
2.	I will remain in child welfare even though I might be offered a position outside of child welfare with a higher salary.	1	2	3	4
3.	I would leave child welfare work tomorrow if I was offered a job for the same salary but with less stress.	1	2	3	4
4.	The personal and professional benefits outweigh the difficulties and frustrations of working in child welfare.	1	2	3	4
5.	I am actively seeking other employment.	1	2	3	4
6.	I feel the personal and professional gratification of working in child welfare to be greater than those in other professions.	1	2	3	4
7.	I frequently think about quitting my job.	1	2	3	4
8.	I am committed to working in child welfare even though it can be quite stressful at times.	1	2	3	4
9.	My intention to remain employed in child welfare is stronger than that of most of my colleagues.	1	2	3	4

HUMAN CARING INVENTORY - SOCIAL WORK

Directions

This section of the survey asks you to make a series of judgements about your personal characteristics and behaviors. The best answer is the one that most accurately reflects your personal views and opinions. Please respond to each statement using the scale provided below. Fill in one number for each item that best corresponds to the strength of your disagreement or agreement **using a # 2 pencil.**

SCALE: 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD) 2 = Disagree (D) 3 = Agree (A) 4 = Strongly Agree (SA)

		SD	D	A	SA
1.	I find it easy to read clients' and colleagues' feelings.	1	2	3	4
2.	I'm usually the first to offer help when someone needs something.	1	2	3	4
3.	It bothers me that some clients don't receive the services they need.	1	2	3	4
4.	I try to identify and examine my personal biases when I perform my job duties.	1	2	3	4
5.	At times, I have wished that something bad would happen to someone I disliked.	1	2	3	4
6.	I would delay personal plans in order to help a client or colleague who needed. assistance	1	2	3	4
7.	I don't particularly enjoy finding out about other people.	1	2	3	4
8.	I advocate for clients who can't or don't speak for themselves.	1	2	3	4
9.	I usually try to avoid becoming involved in clients' problems.	1	2	3	4
10.	I have sometimes taken unfair advantage of another person.	1	2	3	4
11.	Treating a client with dignity and respect is as important as delivering direct services.	1	2	3	4
12.	I am bothered when I can't honor a commitment to a client or colleague.	1	2	3	4
13.	When someone is having troubles, I am sensitive to their feelings and needs.	1	2	3	4
14.	I have trouble relating with clients who abuse or neglect their children.	1	2	3	4
15.	I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way.	1	2	3	4
16.	Parents should be informed of the consequences of their parenting practices at the outset of agency intervention.	1	2	3	4
17.	It is important that clients and/or staff for whom I am responsible know that I personally care about them.	1	2	3	4
18.	I speak up when practices seem contrary to the welfare of others.	1	2	3	4
19.	I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.	1	2	3	4

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE QUESTIONNAIRE - SOCIAL WORK

Directions

In this section of the survey you are asked to make **two judgements about each item: a)** how you ***actually*** see your office work environment, and **b)** how you would ***prefer*** your office work environment to be. The best answer is the one that most accurately reflects your own views and opinions. Please respond to each statement using the scale provided below. Please note that each question begins with ***In this office, child welfare staff:***

SCALE: 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD) 2 = Disagree (D) 3 = Agree (A) 4 = Strongly Agree (SA)

In this office, child welfare staff:		**Actual**				**Preferred**			
		SD	**D**	**A**	**SA**	**SD**	**D**	**A**	**SA**
1.	are proud to work in child welfare.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
2.	find that supervisors/administrators are willing to help them when problems arise.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
3.	spend time in professional reflection about their work.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
4.	view leadership roles as shared by staff and administrators.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
5.	give priority to child safety assessment and permanency planning activities.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
6.	believe that they can have a positive impact on the lives of most of their clients.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
7.	use the findings from child welfare research in their work with children and families.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
8.	treat their colleagues as professionals when there are differences of opinions.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
9.	are encouraged by administrators to provide leadership for new projects.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
10.	find that administrators provide visible, ongoing support for innovations and ideas.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
11.	participate in collaborative sharing about successes and problems in their work.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
12.	find that encouragement is provided for those who are furthering their social work education or are involved in professional development activities.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
13.	are encouraged by administrators to be the best that they can be in their assigned positions.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
14.	are committed to continuous professional development.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
15.	are personally acknowledged by colleagues for their efforts and endeavors.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
16.	cooperatively participate with administrators in developing new agency programs and policies.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

In this office, child welfare staff:		Actual				Preferred			
		SD	D	A	SA	SD	D	A	SA
17.	clearly understand the agency vision for child welfare programs.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
18.	give priority to child safety and permanence above all other agency goals.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
19.	value opportunities to learn from one another.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
20.	are unified in their commitment to accomplish the agency's vision for child welfare.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
21.	find that administrators allow sufficient professional autonomy to make decisions in their work.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
22.	share work experiences with each other to improve the effectiveness of client services.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
23.	believe that members of the administration show a genuine concern for them as professionals in their work.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
24.	encourage each other to use professional judgment when making decisions.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
25.	are willing to support and assist each other when problems arise.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
26.	find that administrators are empathetic with work-related problems and difficulties.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
27.	accept the need for support from their colleagues.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
28.	find that cohesion and consensus among agency staff are valued and encouraged.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
29.	receive the assistance they need from administrators to enhance the quality of case decisions and services to clients.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
30.	believe that work in child welfare is important to the children, families, and communities served.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
31.	continually seek ways to improve child welfare practices.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
32.	spend time mentoring new employees.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
33.	use social work standards, ethics and codes of conduct to frame their child welfare practices.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
34.	feel comfortable with the assistance they receive from colleagues to enhance the quality of their work.	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

SELF-EFFICACY ASSESSMENT - SOCIAL WORK

Directions

This part of the survey requests that you make judgments about the ***strength of your personal beliefs in your capabilities to organize and carry out tasks to successfully accomplish outcomes in child welfare.*** In assessing the strengths of your personal beliefs about each task, consider your abilities in the work context, job roles and responsibilities, available resources, agency support, current policies, help from colleagues, and so on. For each item, fill in the corresponding number.

1 = *Weak*(W) 2 = *Somewhat Strong*(SS) 3 = *Strong* (S) 4 = *Very Strong*(VS)

The strength of my personal beliefs in my capability to:		**W**	**SS**	**S**	**VS**
1.	use assessment skills in decision making about child safety is...	1	2	3	4
2.	regularly expend the energy and effort to accomplish work tasks is...	1	2	3	4
3.	effectively use interviewing skills is...	1	2	3	4
4.	engage individuals in strengths and problem identification is...	1	2	3	4
5.	remain motivated and persist in overcoming difficult or uncertain obstacles to accomplish outcomes for clients is...	1	2	3	4
6.	provide social work treatment interventions with families whose children are in foster care is...	1	2	3	4
7.	simultaneously implement reunification and adoption permanency goals (concurrent planning) is...	1	2	3	4
8.	analyze and synthesize information required for legal actions in child welfare cases is...	1	2	3	4
9.	be an effective witness in child welfare court hearings is...	1	2	3	4
10.	communicate critical written information in a way that is well organized and clear is...	1	2	3	4
11.	work effectively with family members in child neglect cases is...	1	2	3	4
12.	rebound and persist after failures in my efforts to accomplish work goals is...	1	2	3	4
13.	assist children in working through separation from their family members is...	1	2	3	4
14.	accurately assess parenting capability is...	1	2	3	4
15.	effectively work with clients and co-workers in a culturally sensitive manner is...	1	2	3	4
16.	influence my career opportunities in the child welfare organization in which I work is...	1	2	3	4
17.	work with child sexual abuse victims, non-offending parents and sexual perpetrators is...	1	2	3	4
18.	work effectively within the structure of my state organization is...	1	2	3	4
19.	work collaboratively with staff from other community agencies is...	1	2	3	4
20.	interpret and apply agency policies in my job assignment is...	1	2	3	4

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Directions

Please complete the following items by filling in the appropriate space or by writing in any relevant information. Data for this study will be aggregated and analyzed so that **no** individual will be identified!

1. Work Location Zip Code: _ _ _ _ _

2. Office Level:
_State Office
_Area/Regional/District Office
_County/Parish Office

3. Gender: _ Male _ Female

4. Age:
_ 20 - 25
_ 26 - 30
_ 31 - 35
_ 36 - 40
_ 41 - 45
_ 46 - 50
_ 51 - 55
_ 56 - 60
_ Over 60

5. Ethnicity:
_African American, non Hispanic
_Asian/Pacific Islander
_Caucasian, non Hispanic
_Hispanic/Latino
_Native American
_Other

6. Highest Educational Level & Major?
_Less than baccalaureate degree
_ _Baccalaureate degree

Major:
Social Work
Arts & the humanities
Business
History/political science
Education
Psychology
Math
General Studies
English/Foreign Languages _
Sociology
Physical/Biological sciences
Other

_ _Masters Degree in Social Work
Other_____

_Doctorate Degree in Social Work
Other_____

7. Are you currently working toward an MSW degree? _ Yes _ No

8. Current position?
_ Caseworker/social worker
_ Supervisor
_ District/regional supervisor
_ District/regional administrator
_ State office manager/specialist
_ State office administrator
_ Other_____

9. Current program assignment?
_ Child protection investigation
_ In-home family services
_ Intensive home based family preservation
_ Foster care/permanency planning
_ Adoption
_ Recruit/certify foster/adoptive family homes
_ Multiple programs
Other_____

10. Length of child welfare employment?

# of Years____

11. How long do you plan to remain employed in child welfare?

Years____

12. Do you plan to retire in the next 10 year(s)?

If so, in how many Years?_____

Please return this survey in the enclosed self addressed, stamped envelope directly to: Bert Ellett, LSU Mailing Services, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803 by March 17th. Your responses will be treated anonymously and confidentially.

Many thanks for taking time out of your busy schedule to complete this survey. Your professional contributions and cooperation in completing this task are greatly appreciated!

APPENDIX C

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITIONS AND ITEMS FOR MEASURES DERIVED FROM FACTOR ANALYSES

HUMAN CARING INVENTORY - SOCIAL WORK

The affective component of Human Caring is conceptually defined given the results of the factor analyses in this study as: the tendency to be supportive, nurturing, responsive and sensitive to the needs and feelings of others, to easily form relationships, to treat others with human dignity and respect and to take responsibility for one's actions for the welfare of others.

Items that loaded on this one factor solution forming the new HCI-SW measure (excluding social desirability items #s 5, 10, 15, & 19) are as follows:

1. I find it easy to read clients' and colleagues' feelings.

2. I'm usually the first to offer help when someone needs something.

3. It bothers me that some clients don't receive the services they need.

4. I try to identify and examine my personal biases when I perform my job duties.

6. I would delay personal plans in order to help a client or colleague who needed assistance.

8. I advocate for clients who can't or don't speak for themselves.

9. I usually try to avoid becoming involved in clients' problems.

11. Treating a client with dignity and respect is as important as delivering direct services.

12. I am bothered when I can't honor a commitment to a client or colleague.

13. When someone is having troubles, I am sensitive to their feelings and needs.

16. Parents should be informed of the consequences of their parenting practices at the outset of agency intervention.

17. It is important that clients and/or staff for whom I am responsible know that I personally care about them.

18. I speak up when practices seem contrary to the welfare of others.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE QUESTIONNAIRE - SOCIAL WORK

Professional organizational culture is defined as: perceptions of the norms (both formal and informal), values, interests, and beliefs shared among members of an organization that emanate from established professional ethics and standards that guide individual and collective behavior of organizational members.

Administrative support refers to: the extent to which administrators interact with subordinates as professionals and encourage child welfare staff to share responsibilities for organizational vision and leadership and to continue personal, professional development.

In this office, child welfare staff:

2. find that supervisors/administrators are willing to help them when problems arise.

4. view leadership roles as shared by staff and administrators.

9. are encouraged by administrators to provide leadership for new projects.

10. find that administrators provide visible, ongoing support for innovations and ideas.

12. find that encouragement is provided for those who are furthering their social work education or are involved in professional development activities.

13. are encouraged by administrators to be the best that they can be in their assigned positions.

16. cooperatively participate with administrators in developing new agency programs and policies.

21. find that administrators allow sufficient professional autonomy to make decisions in their work.

23. believe that members of the administration show a genuine concern for them as professionals in their work.

26. find that administrators are empathetic with work-related problems and difficulties.

29. receive the assistance they need from administrators to enhance the quality of case decisions and services to clients.

Professional sharing and support refers to: the quantity and quality of interpersonal relationships among staff that enhance professional interactions, learning and development.

In this office, child welfare staff:

19. professionally share and learn from one another.

22. share work experiences with each other to improve the effectiveness of client services.

24. encourage each other to exercise professional judgment when making decisions.

25. are willing to provide support and assist each other when problems arise.

27. accept the need for support from their colleagues.

32. spend time mentoring new employees.

34. feel comfortable with the assistance they receive from colleagues to enhance the quality of their work.

Vision/professionalism/commitment refers to: the extent to which shared values among staff reflect child welfare practices that demonstrate commitment to the continuous improvement of services to clients.

In this office, child welfare staff:

1. are proud to work in child welfare.

3. spend time in professional reflection about their work.

5. give priority to child safety assessment and permanency planning activities.

6. believe that they can have a positive impact on the lives of most of their clients.

7. use the findings from child welfare research in their work with children and families.

14. are committed to continuous professional development.

17. clearly understand the agency vision for child welfare programs.

18. give priority to child safety and permanence above all other agency goals.

SELF-EFFICACY ASSESSMENT - SOCIAL WORK

Self-efficacy tasks is derived from the work of Bandura (1997) who defines self-efficacy as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to produce given attainments." (p.3), (specifically work tasks with clients).

The strength of my personal beliefs in my capability to (item statement).....is

1. use assessment skills in decision making about child safety is...

3. effectively use interviewing skills is...

4. engage individuals in strengths and problem identification is...

6. provide social work treatment interventions with families whose children are in foster care is...

7. simultaneously implement reunification and adoption permanency goals (concurrent planning) is...

8. analyze and synthesize information required for legal actions in child welfare cases is...

9. be an effective witness in child welfare court hearings is...

11. work effectively with family members in child neglect cases is...

13. assist children in working through separation from their family members is...

14. accurately assess parenting capability is...

17. work with child sexual abuse victims, non-offending parents and sexual perpetrators is...

Self-efficacy motivation refers to: the extent which individuals put forth energy and effort in their work and persist in the face of obstacles/barriers to accomplish given attainments and their perceptions of effectiveness in accomplishing key organizational outcomes.

The strength of my personal beliefs in my capability to (item statement)..... .is

2. regularly expend the energy and effort to accomplish work tasks is...

5. remain motivated and persist in overcoming difficult or uncertain obstacles to accomplish outcomes for clients is...

12. rebound and persist after failures in my efforts to accomplish work goals is...

15. effectively work with clients and co-workers in a culturally sensitive manner is...

16. influence my career opportunities in the child welfare organization in which I work is...

18. work effectively within the structure of my state organization is...

19. work collaboratively with staff from other community agencies is...

20. interpret and apply agency policies in my job assignment is..

VITA

Alberta J. Shelinbarger Ellett was born in Topeka, Kansas, and graduated from Topeka High School. She graduated from the University of Alabama with a bachelor of science degree with a major in microbiology and minor in chemistry in 1969.

Ms. Ellett's first job in social work was as a child welfare caseworker in Americus, Georgia. She quickly realized her need to pursue a masters' in social work, which she did at the University of Georgia, graduating in 1974. Ms. Ellett married Chad Ellett in 1968 and is the mother of their two sons, Geoff and Aaron, in addition to rearing a niece and nephew. She has worked in child welfare for over 25 years as a social worker, supervisor, and for the last 14 years as a program manager in the State Office of the Louisiana Department of Social Services/Office of Community Services. Ms. Ellett developed and implemented the Title IV-E funded child welfare partnership projects with the seven state university departments and schools of social work in Louisiana from 1993 to 1999. She was employed for three years at the University of Georgia (1979 - 1982) as the Associate Project Director of a federal contract to develop a 45 hour curriculum for adoption staff nationwide, to place children with special needs. Upon its completion, she conducted ten week-long training of trainer sessions with state office level staff from every state in the United States.

Ms Ellett initiated the child welfare symposium within the Council of Social Work Education (1997) and has presented numerous workshops and academic papers at national child welfare and social work conferences. Ms Ellett joins the University of Georgia, School of Social Work, Athens, Georgia, in August, 2000, as an assistant professor.

DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Alberta J. Ellett

Major Field: Social Work

Title of Dissertation: HUMAN CARING, SELF-EFFICACY BELIEFS, AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE CORRELATES OF EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN CHILD WELFARE

Approved:

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Date of Examination:

June 2, 2000